VOL. XXIII, No. 1 JULY, 1925 No. 89

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents
Published by The Theosophical Society
at 64 Washington Mews, New York, N. Y.
July; October; January; April
Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 4 Sunningdale Avenue, Walker, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, 6s., postpaid.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XXIII, NO. 1

July, 1925

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	1
FRAGMENTS	10
THEOSOPHY	11
A VIEW OF ELEMENTALS	19
THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS: ST. TERESA, II (CONTINUED)	22
VAKYA SUDHA: THE ESSENCE OF THE TEACHING	28
ON THE SCREEN OF TIME	32
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	40
T. S. ACTIVITIES: CONVENTION REPORT; LETTERS OF GREETING; REPORT OF MEETING NEW YORK BRANCH	47
REVIEWS	91
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	94

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered as second-class matter September 5, 1923, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Copyright, 1925, by The Theosophical Society

HARVARD COLLEGE
JUL 6 1925
LIBRARY
Gift

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1925

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

The Fruits of Discipleship

THE questions of King Ajatashatru, with the Buddha's answers, make up the Sutta called *The Fruits of Discipleship*. There is a certain likeness between the position of the king and that of the young man who had great possessions, in the history of the Western Master. Ajatashatru, already endowed with power and wealth, longed for spiritual wisdom, a wisdom deeper and better than could be gained from the accepted teachers within his kingdom. So he came to the great Eastern Master seeking enlightenment. The resemblance comes out vividly in the Buddha's comment at the end of the discourse, after Ajatashatru had departed, returning to his palace:

"Deeply stirred was the king, disciples; touched to the heart was the king. If, disciples, the king had not deprived of life his father, righteous, a righteous king, even here and now he would have gained the divine vision, passionless, stainless."

Because of the barrier of this old crime, committed through the desire for great possessions, Ajatashatru went away, seeking no further light from the Enlightened. Though the path was open before him, he did not set his feet on it, determined to follow it to the end.

It was part of the Buddha's fine courtesy that he did not rebuke the king when Ajatashatru, deeply moved, repented and confessed his sin of parricide, but sent him away with words of sympathetic understanding and consolation, recognizing in him one who earnestly longed for light.

That high, serene courtesy was habitual with Gotama Buddha, a part of his deepest nature; an unvarying graciousness of manner, and also the rarer intellectual courtesy, an attitude of sympathetic tolerance and forbearance toward views the very opposite of his own teaching. The editors of the Suttas have admirably described this mental and moral attitude in the Introduction to another Sutta:

"The Buddha, in conversation with a naked ascetic, explains his position as regards asceticism, so far, that is, as is compatible with his invariable method when discussing a point on which he differs from his interlocutor.

"When speaking on sacrifice to a sacrificial priest, on union with God to an adherent of the current theology, on Brahman claims to superior social rank to a proud Brahman, on mystic insight to a man who trusts in it, on the soul to one who believes in the soul theory, the method followed is always the same. Gotama puts himself as far as possible in the mental position of the questioner. He attacks none of his cherished convictions. He accepts as the starting-point of his own exposition the desirability of the act or condition prized by his opponent. He even adopts the very phraseology of his questioner. And then, partly by putting a new and a higher meaning into the words; partly by an appeal to such ethical conceptions as are common ground between them, he gradually leads his opponent up to his conclusion. This is, of course, always Arahatship; that is the sweetest fruit of the life of a recluse, that is the best sacrifice, that the highest social rank, that the best means of seeing heavenly sights, and a more worthy object. There is both courtesy and dignity in the method employed."

The Sutta of *The Fruits of Discipleship* begins with one of those vivid, dramatically conceived pictures which so often introduce the discourses of the Buddha, graphically calling up before us a view of the India of his day and the personality and character of those to whom the discourse is addressed.

King Ajatashatru, ruler of Magadha, was seated among his ministers and friends on the upper terrace of his palace. It was the night of the full moon at the beginning of November, when the cold season had succeeded to the rains, the time when the white water-lily blooms. To his ministers and friends Ajatashatru spoke:

"Delightful is the luminous night; full of charm is the luminous night; fair to look upon is the luminous night; peaceful is the luminous night; auspicious is the luminous night. What ascetic or Brahman may we reverently visit, who, reverently visited, may fill our hearts with peace?"

The ministers, entering into the king's mood, named, one after the other, six teachers, each the head of an Order, with many followers, famed, revered, who had sought wisdom for many years.

As each was named, the king remained silent. The king's physician was seated near him. To him Ajatashatru said:

"And you, beloved Jivaka, why so silent?"

"Your Majesty, the Master, the Arahat, supremely enlightened, is now resting in our Mango Grove, with a great company of his disciples. This fair fame has gone abroad concerning the Master Gotama, that the Master is an Arahat, supremely enlightened, perfect in wisdom and holiness, happy, with insight into the worlds, guiding men to righteousness, giving the good law to gods and to men, an awakened Buddha. Let Your Majesty reverently visit this Master, for, visiting this Master, he will fill the heart with peace."

"Then, beloved Jivaka, bid them caparison the riding elephants."

So the elephants were caparisoned, and, surrounded by torch-bearers, they went forth into the luminous night. The Mango Grove belonged to Jivaka, the king's physician, and his inviting Gotama to abide there, makes it appear that Jivaka was himself an adherent of the Buddha. It may be noted in passing that it is still the custom to pitch a camp in the deep shade of a mango grove, where the tall, clean stems and thick covering of glossy leaves make an ideal shelter from the almost vertical sun, which is oppressively hot even in November, at the beginning of the cold season, as it is called by comparison with burning May.

Then comes a charming bit of literary art, through which the composer of the Sutta brings out the admirably quiet manners that were distinctive of the Buddha's Order.

The cortège drew near to the Mango Grove. As they drew near, there was fear, there was stupor in the heart of King Ajatashatru, so that his flesh crept. Alarmed and excited, he said to Jivaka:

"Are you not tricking me, beloved Jivaka? Are you not laying a trap to deliver me to my enemies? For how could there be so many disciples, and not even the sound of a cough or a sneeze?"

It is worth noting that Ajatashatru, who had ensnared and murdered his father, should in his turn dread a treacherous attack. But the good physician answered:

"Fear not, king! I am not tricking Your Majesty, nor laying a trap to deliver you to your enemies. Go forward, king! Go forward, for there in the pavilion the lamps are burning!"

So Ajatashatru, the king of Magadha, went forward as far as the elephants could go; then alighting, he proceeded on foot and came to the entrance of the pavilion. There he spoke thus to Jivaka the physician:

"Beloved Jivaka, which is the Master?"

"That is the Master, O king! That is the Master, seated at the central pillar, facing the east, in the midst of his disciples!"

As Ajatashatru stood there, looking at the assembly of disciples, still and serene as a quiet lake, he breathed this ardent wish:

"Would that my boy Udayi Bhadra might be endowed with quietude such as these disciples possess!"

"Your thought has gone, O king, where your love is!"

"I love the boy; therefore I would that he were endowed with such quietude as these disciples!"

Then the king, when he had saluted the Master, and with joined palms had saluted the Order, seated himself at one side, and addressed a question to the Master. This is the question which was earlier summarized thus:

"All practical arts and sciences show visible and immediate fruit. Thus the potter makes vessels which are useful to mankind, and the sale of which brings him money. So with the carpenter, the builder and others. Now, I wish to know whether there is in the life of the disciple any visible, tangible and immediate fruit like the fruit obtained by the potter, the carpenter, the builder!"

In the text, no less than twenty-five professions and occupations are enumerated, with the completeness of detail which is so characteristic of the Buddhist Suttas, even beyond the measure of other Oriental writings. Their visible rewards are detailed in the same way: they maintain themselves in happiness, they maintain their mothers and fathers in happiness, they maintain their children and wives in happiness, they maintain their friends and companions in happiness; to ascetics and to Brahmans they give gifts which bring a spiritual reward, which lead to heaven, which bring happiness, which have heaven as their reward. Can the Master make known a like fruit in the case of the disciple, a fruit visible even here?

The Buddha follows his almost invariable custom of answering a question by asking a question:

"Do you acknowledge, O king, that you have addressed this same question to other ascetics and Brahmans?"

"I acknowledge, Sir, that I have addressed this question to other ascetics and Brahmans!"

"Then, O king, if it be not displeasing to you, tell how they answered."

"It is not displeasing to me, where the Master or those like the Master are concerned!"

This is the introduction to a very full description of the character and teachings of the six ascetics who had been suggested to the king as worthy of a visit on that luminous night. It would be exceedingly interesting, did space permit, to study at some length the views of each one of them. For the present it must suffice to say that they were all in their way sincere. They had all set forth to seek the path of wisdom. They had all strayed from the Path. While some of them were materialists and nihilists with a degree of thoroughness of which we have hardly any conception, they were not materialistic in the modern sense. They were all ascetics. They had renounced the world with its pomps and vanities.

They were not ensnared by the allurements of the senses or the desire of wealth. They were ensnared by the processes of their own minds. Finding a keen delight in elaborate dialectics, they had fixed their whole attention on the workings of the mind machine, and had become altogether absorbed in its various and endless activities. And, as a result, they had quenched the light of the spirit. Each in his tragic way, they illustrate the mind as the slayer of the real. Since they had fallen back from the light of the spirit into the meshes of the mind, they had failed to escape from the domination of self. As a result, they are argumentative, dogmatic, self-assertive, egotistic.

Once more, the narrator takes advantage of this situation to draw a picture of Ajatashatru's considerateness. Let the king tell it in his own words:

"When I asked each of them concerning the visible fruit of discipleship, he set forth his own teaching. It was as though, asked about a mango, he had described a breadfruit, or asked about a breadfruit, he had described a mango. Then, Sir, I bethought me thus: 'How should such a one as I think of causing displeasure to any ascetic or Brahman in my dominions?' So expressing

neither approval nor disapproval, neither accepting nor rejecting his teaching, I arose from my seat and departed." It will be remembered that, when these same teachers were named to the king, as he rested on the terrace of his palace, he exercised the same forbearance, not even telling his ministers that he had already tried them all and found them wanting, but remaining silent.

In quoting the editors of the Suttas regarding the fine courtesy of the Buddha, we passed without comment the phrase: "One who believes in the soul theory." It is misleading, and therefore the complementary assertion, that the Buddha controverted the soul theory, is equally misleading. The word used is *Atta*, the Pali modulation of *Atma*, but in Pali the meaning is restricted to the personal self, the principle of egotism; *Atta-vada* is not the assertion of the supreme Atma, but self-assertion, self-centred egotism, self-love. What the Buddha taught, just as Shankaracharya later taught it, was that the personal self has no lasting being, no reality. He saw, with vision surpassing that of mortals, that, until the tyranny of self was broken, until this grasping egotism was completely overthrown and annihilated, the disciple could not advance upon the Path; could not safely draw near to the Path. It is the teaching of all Masters, and the most vital. When the author of the *Imitation of Christ* records his Master as saying:

"If thou knewest perfectly to annihilate thyself, and to empty thyself of all created love, then should I be constrained to flow into thee with great abundance of grace," he does not for a moment think that this self-annihilation means the final blotting out of consciousness, the end of spiritual life; it is rather the beginning.

The teaching of the Buddha is exactly the same, and with the same end in view. He knew very well that the disciple who had fought the great fight and won the victory, annihilating self, would make his own discoveries, and he was content to await that hour of illumination, rather than risk the carrying forward of the poisonous thought of "self" into a wider world. The Buddha is not controverting "the soul theory," he is denying the reality of the "self." But the soul, in his teaching, is not a circumscribed being, changeless throughout eternity; it is not static but dynamic; not an iceberg or a landlocked pool, but a flowing stream that shall become a river, a mighty river moving toward the ocean of Being, and losing there its last limitations.

To come back to the questioning of Ajatashatru; he asks the Buddha, as he had asked the six teachers, whether the Buddha could show him any visible fruit, in this world, of the life of the disciple.

The Buddha again answers with a question, and his answer appeals to a feeling, profound, deeply rooted in the heart of every Oriental: the instinctive reverence for those who have entered the religious life, a feeling only the vestiges of which linger in our western lands, as when Sisters of Charity go confidently into the slums of a city, where even the law goes armed and alert against some treacherous attack.

He asks Ajatashatru to imagine one of his own people, a slave, busy with the king's work, rising earlier, going to rest later than the king, one faithful

in act, pleasant in word, watching the king's every look. Should such a one, contrasting his slavery with the king's power and wealth, bethink him that the king was reaping the reward of great merit, and, to win merit for himself, determine to enter the religious life, would the king, hearing that he had donned the yellow robes, wish him to return and become once more a slave?

The king answers that he would greet such a one with reverence, rising to receive him, bidding him be seated, and bestowing on him such things as a religious may use.

This, the Buddha comments, is a visible fruit of discipleship. It is impossible not to recognize the art, as well as admire the sympathy, with which the great Teacher begins at the point of Ajatashatru's common experience and habitual feeling; impossible not to see also that he is seeking to touch the king's heart, to awaken in him the latent homesickness for discipleship, and to strengthen it until it becomes intolerable. Therefore he goes on to instance another who has entered the path, this time a freeman, a householder. Would the king wish such a one to renounce the path and to return to his village?

The king makes the same reply. On the contrary, he would greet such a one with reverence, rising as before, and giving him gifts. This also is a visible fruit of discipleship. So far, the Buddha has spoken only of the liberation of the religious life and the reverence paid to the religious, things instinctively recognized by Ajatashatru, as by all Orientals.

The Buddha now goes further:

"Suppose, O king, that a Tathagata is born in the world, an Arahat, fully awakened, endowed with wisdom and righteousness, benign, knowing the worlds, unsurpassed as a guide of men, a teacher of bright beings and of mortals, a Buddha, a Master. He of himself thoroughly knows and sees face to face the universe, the world of bright powers, the world of dark powers, the world of the formative divinities, the world of ascetics and of Brahmans, the peoples of the earth, the bright powers and mankind, and declares his knowledge to others. He proclaims the Law, lovely in its beginning, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation, in the spirit and in the letter, he reveals the spiritual life in its fulness, in its purity. This Law a householder hears, or a householder's son, or one born in any other class. Hearing this Law, he gains faith in the Tathagata. Filled with faith in the Tathagata, he considers thus within himself: 'Hard is the life of the householder, a path of dust and passion; free as air is the life of him who has renounced. Not easy is it for him who is a householder to live the spiritual life in its fulness, in its purity, in its perfection. Let me then be shaven and, donning the yellow robes, let me leave my dwelling and enter the way of renunciation.' Then in no long time leaving his portion of wealth, be it small or great, and his circle of relatives, be they few or many, he is shaven and, donning the yellow robes, departs from his dwelling and enters the way of renunciation."

This brings us naturally to the question whether the literal abandonment of home and family, and of the ordinary means of livelihood, is indispensable, if the life of discipleship is to be complete. A living Aryan Master, who looks up

to the Buddha as his supreme Master and Lord, writing to one who was a householder with wife and child depending on him, gives a profound and inspiring answer:

"Does it seem to you a small thing that the past year has been spent only in your 'family duties'? Nay but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty? Believe me my 'pupil,' the man or woman who is placed by Karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices and loving-kindness, will, through these faithfully fulfilled, rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice, and Charity to all Humanity; what better paths toward the enlightenment you are striving after than the daily conquest of self, the perseverance in spite of want of visible psychic progress, the bearing of ill-fortune with that serene fortitude which turns it to spiritual advantage, since good and evil are not to be measured by events on the lower or physical plane. . . . Your spiritual progress is far greater than you know or can realize, and you do well to believe that such development is in itself more important than its realization by your physical plane consciousness."

Yet there are serious difficulties in the path of the aspirant who seeks to combine the life of the householder with the life of the disciple. We have heard a good deal, of late, concerning the presence of carbon monoxide in our cities, and the injury it causes to the trees in the parks. Perhaps there is also a moral carbon monoxide in the inner atmosphere of a city which, while it is not an absolute barrier to the higher degrees of development, makes their attainment much harder. But it is certain that the grossness, the selfishness, the craving for excitement which our cities are full of, are absolute barriers to discipleship and to its fruits. The disciple may be in the world; he cannot be of the world. The Western Master expresses exactly the same truth, when he says:

"The sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection."

It would seem, therefore, that the "going forth" of the householder, like the shaven head and the yellow robes, is a symbol, and something more. Whether he dwell in a palace or a hermitage, he who would be a disciple must have renounced all grossness and sordid interests, all selfishness and self-seeking, with the completeness which is typified by the householder's going forth. He seeks to enter a new order of being, a new world, and he must comply with its conditions. So we come back to the Buddha's answer to the king:

"Thus he who has gone forth dwells obedient to the rules of the Order, rejoicing in righteousness, seeing danger in the least transgression, accepting and training himself in the precepts, righteous in word and deed, innocent in his livelihood, righteous in conduct, keeping the door of the senses, recollected in consciousness, happy.

"With heart and mind thus concentrated, purified, cleansed, free from stain, supple, active, steadfast, unwavering, he builds up a body of the substance of mind, concentrating heart and mind on the task. From the physical body he builds up another body, a form of the substance of mind, with all its parts and members, not lacking any power.

"It is as though a man were to draw forth a reed from its sheath, clearly seeing that this is the reed, this the sheath; the reed is one, the sheath is other; from the sheath, the reed has been drawn forth."

The Buddha is here quoting the very words of a famous passage in the *Katha Upanishad:*

"The spiritual man, the inner Self, dwells in the heart of men. Let the disciple draw him forth, firmly, like the reed from the sheath; let him know the spiritual man as the pure, the immortal."

As the spiritual man, thus born from above, the son of the resurrection, he then enters a new order of life, a new world. The remainder of the Sutta is devoted to an enumeration and description of the powers and faculties which he inherits, as the proper endowment of this new life. We have only space to outline them, leaving a fuller consideration for a future occasion.

"With heart and mind thus concentrated, purified, cleansed, free from stain, supple, active, steadfast, unwavering, he directs and concentrates heart and mind on the forms of spiritual power. He enjoys spiritual power in its various degrees: being one, he becomes manifold, being manifold, he becomes one; he becomes visible or invisible; he passes unhindered through a wall or a mountain; he descends and ascends through the earth as through water; he walks on the water as if on the earth; seated in meditation, he traverses space, like a winged falcon; he touches moon and sun with his hand; he attains even to the world of Brahma.

"He concentrates heart and mind on the power of divine hearing. With clear divine hearing, surpassing that of mortals, he hears sounds both divine and human, both afar and nigh at hand.

"He concentrates heart and mind on the insight which penetrates the heart. With his own heart penetrating the hearts of other beings, of other men, he understands them. He discerns the hearts and minds of others as clearly as a woman sees her face in a mirror.

"He knows his past births without number, as though a man, going from one village to another, and from that to another, and then returning home, should say, 'From my own village I came to that other. There I stood in such and such a way, sat thus, spoke thus, was silent thus. Then I came to that other village, stood thus, sat thus, spoke thus, was silent thus. And now from that other village I have come home.'

"With clear divine vision, surpassing that of mortals, he sees beings as they pass from one form of existence and take shape in another; he recognizes the mean and the noble, the well favoured and the ill favoured, the happy and the wretched, passing away according to their deeds; these he sees as clearly as though one should watch men entering and leaving a house, or walking on the street.

"He perceives the truths concerning misery, the origin of misery, the cessation of misery, the path that leads to the cessation of misery, as one, standing by a pool among the mountains, looking down into the pool, may see the sand and pebbles at the bottom, and the fish in the pool.

"These are the fruits of discipleship."

When the Master had thus spoken, Ajatashatru, king of Magadha, thus addressed him:

"Excellent, Lord! Excellent, Lord! Just as though one should set up what has been overthrown, or reveal what has been hidden, or show the way to him who has gone astray, or bring light into darkness that men might see, so by the Master has the truth been revealed to me.

"Therefore, I take my refuge in the Master, I take my refuge in the Law, I take my refuge in the Order of disciples. May the Master accept me as a lay disciple, come to him as my refuge, from to-day so long as life endures. Sin overcame me, Lord, a fool, deluded, beset by evil, in that, for the sake of sovereignty, I deprived of life my father, righteous, a righteous king. May the Master accept this sin confessed, that for all time to come I may have the victory over it!"

"Sin indeed overcame you, O king, as a fool, deluded, beset by evil, that you deprived of life your father, righteous, a righteous king. But as you see your sin and rightly confess it, it is accepted by me. For this is according to the rule of the noble one, that he who sees his sin and rightly confesses it, shall for all time have the victory over it."

Then said Ajatashatru, king of Magadha, "Now, Lord, we must go. There is much work, much for me to do!"

"Do, O king, as you think fit!"

Then Ajatashatru, delighted and rejoiced by the words of the Master, reverently saluting the Master, went his way.

When the king had departed, the Master said to his disciples:

"Deeply stirred was the king, disciples; touched to the heart was the king. If, disciples, the king had not deprived of life his father, righteous, a righteous king, even here and now he would have gained the divine vision, passionless, stainless."

When the Master had thus spoken, the disciples were rejoiced and glad of heart.

FRAGMENTS

THE sin against the Holy Ghost is the use of Light and Truth for the compassing of low or selfish ends. Because unregenerate man will inevitably do this, we can see clearly why all real knowledge must be kept secret, and only imparted to those who are trained and tested and pledged. Had the Lodge given its knowledge to man, man would long since have destroyed himself. The secrecy is not for the protection of the Lodge or of its knowledge, which need no protection, but for the protection of man. It is only the courtesy of the Lodge which puts it otherwise.

The Black Lodge seeks to give man knowledge because it seeks to compass man's destruction. Much of modern knowledge has been so given, and this accounts in large part for the chaos and misery in the world to-day. Man ate of the Fruit of the Tree at the instigation of the Old Serpent far back in the early days, when self-consciousness and free-will were emerging on the plane of manifestation. He has been eating, at the same instigation, ever since, only to find death and the loss of his Paradise as unfailing consequence. Were it not for the compassion and sacrifice that have sustained and thwarted him, he would long since have slipped from his "lake of fire," into that nether Void from which he came.

Interest yourself only in that which has immortality, and then interest yourself in its immortal part.

Peace is dual; like all else on this plane, higher and lower. Peace, therefore, is neither good nor evil *of itself*, but only as it belongs to the higher or lower side of nature. The peace of the lower nature is devilish; the peace of the higher nature is divine. The divine cannot have peace on the lower planes; the lower nature cannot have peace on the higher planes. Therefore there must always be war until the plane of duality has been transcended.

CAVÉ.

THEOSOPHY[1]

AT the Convention of The Theosophical Society yesterday, much was said regarding the significance of the fact that the Society is completing the fiftieth year since its foundation in 1875. We looked back over the years that are gone. We looked forward to the years that are to come. It may be of genuine interest this afternoon to consider the past more in detail, that we may understand the present, and wisely and courageously face the future.

The history of The Theosophical Society might be summed up in three sentences:

Founded by the Masters of Wisdom;
Sustained by the Masters of Wisdom;
Leading to the Masters of Wisdom.

There is our history, past, present and future. At this point, it would be natural to ask, What do you mean by Masters? What is the meaning of Masters of Wisdom? That is the first question that I shall try, so far as quite limited capacity allows, to answer. I shall make use of two stepping stones, both of which originated on this continent: namely, Emerson's phrase "the Oversoul," and the phrase of a Canadian, "Cosmic consciousness." Those who are lovers of Emerson, as so many of us are, will remember that fine essay on the Oversoul, the collective soul of humanity, the great treasury of wisdom and beauty and truth and power, to which each one of us has access as "an inlet to the same and to all of the same;" with the result that, if we enter into the Oversoul, we shall thereby enter into Cosmic consciousness, into consciousness of the Cosmos as the Oversoul. To use a phrase of the Buddha, we shall see and know the universe face to face.

While "Oversoul" is Emerson's coinage, it exactly translates the Sanskrit term, Adhi-Atma, "Over-soul"; and the Eastern teaching is that there are, as it were, degrees, steps of the stair, graduated stages in our ascent to the Oversoul, perhaps thrice seven degrees, each of which has its proper powers, its insight, its wisdom, its knowledge, its view of the universe. At each stage, there is the manifestation of a fitting vesture for that stage. As Saint Paul says, there are natural bodies and spiritual bodies, there are terrestrial bodies and bodies celestial. As we ascend, each of these vestures has a larger measure of the Oversoul, a fuller degree of divine wisdom, divine love, divine beneficence, divine power, until we come to the degrees of the Masters who have attained, who have become as one with the Oversoul, while remaining individuals in the fullest sense, perfect god and perfect man.

Therefore we hold that the Masters are the decisive factor in all human his-

[1] A lecture by Charles Johnston, on April 26, 1925, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

tory; in all history they stand out as mountain peaks above the plain of our common humanity. Take such a figure as Osiris in ancient Egypt, ten or twelve thousand years ago. Take a great figure like Krishna in India; or Siddhartha the Compassionate, Gotama Buddha; or Jesus of Nazareth; of so great stature that they have been first persecuted, then deified. There are degrees even in the stature of the Masters, because there is ever the possibility of added wisdom, added power, added love. The infinite is never attained. Every Master strives ceaselessly toward what he knows to be the unattainable infinite; we must do the same.

In our western intellectual world we find figures of the same type. At the very beginning of our detailed history, there stands the great personality of Pythagoras, to whom all our philosophical thinking goes back, with the word Philosophy itself, the love of wisdom.

We have spoken of Osiris. It would be well worth while to consider how far the famous wise men of Greece, men like Pythagoras, Thales, Solon, owed their wisdom to ancient Egypt, and to the Masters of ancient Egypt. The same principle, the tradition of a Master who brings illumination, is universal among the races and tribes of the world. One has heard this tradition from the lips of our own Cheyenne Indians, who speak of a mighty hero who went to dwell with the gods for a long period of years, and, coming back, taught them all that was suited to a primitive people, with the ideals of a true and sane family life, and of tribal order and discipline. So universal, indeed, is the tradition, that we have in anthropology the phrase, "culture hero", to express it. Some of our wise anthropologists speak of the culture hero as a myth. But we are convinced that the culture hero is more genuinely historical than much of the writings of our historians; he is the essential factor in the life of mankind, the Master teaching the arts of true human life to us who are only half human.

The Theosophical Society was founded by the Masters, and is sustained by the Masters. How came it to be founded? At the foundation of our Society, two great personalities stand out: Mme. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge. A good deal has been written, and perhaps most abundantly in the recent past, which purports to be the history of Mme. Blavatsky. Those who really knew her, and knew her for years, think that it is, perhaps, most charitable to say as little as possible about these modern histories, but to get back to the facts. Some forty years ago, Mme. Blavatsky was well described by W. Q. Judge, as the greatest woman living, and greater than any man living among men; a memorable characterization, profoundly true.

To touch for a moment on the personal side, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, of whom we often speak, using her initials, as H. P. B., came of the older noble families of Russia, on one side going back to the Princes Dolgoruki, the founders of Moscow. There was also old noble blood of France in her veins, an aristocrat of aristocrats in the truest sense, entitled in her own land to the prefix, "Her Excellency." Going back to my memory of Mme. Blavatsky, let me imagine for a moment that she were to hear me describe her in those terms. I

can picture the splendid, lion-like head, the big, blue, humourous eyes, the winning smile, and her comment, " My dear, that is all flapdoodle!"

She had indeed given up all, putting aside everything except her undying devotion to the Masters.

It has been the custom of some who never compared with her in true delicacy of heart, to speak of Mme. Blavatsky as a rough and rugged personality. In one sense she was, if a volcano may be described as rugged. In a room with her, one felt the room very small, and oneself very small, while the volcano was very big and tremendously active. One has met in many lands people of dominance and force, but for sheer dynamic splendour, not one of them could compare with Mme. Blavatsky.

Among her many gifts, she was an accomplished writer in three of the great literary languages of Europe, and a student of many of the tongues of the Orient. Of her Russian writings, I have several volumes, admirably written impressions of India, vivid, full of humour, excellent Russian prose; so that, before Russia sank into the depths, her books were widely known for their virtues of style and of substance. And, though contributed in the first instance to the literary papers and reviews as general correspondence, they are intensely theosophical. Single-hearted, she had but one interest in life, Theosophy, The Theosophical Society, the Masters of Theosophy. These appear again and again in her Russian writings. A section of one of her books deals with what students of Theosophy call the seven principles: the division of man into spirit, soul and body, with the further division of these three into seven; it is an interesting and somewhat surprising experience to find our theosophical terms in Russian letters. A wonderful book, a clear and powerful presentation of theosophical teachings, set amid vivid, magnificently coloured pictures of India, written for the Russian papers and magazines. An accomplished writer in three languages, French, Russian, English; and in all literature there are very few who have written with real distinction in more than one tongue.

But not for these gifts, valuable and exceptional though they be, do we hold in our hearts eternal gratitude for Mme. Blavatsky. For possessions other than these, we revere and admire her beyond measure: for her loyalty, sovereign, kingly loyalty; for her courage, invincible, indomitable valour; for her immense generosity, personal, intellectual, spiritual. In her relations with those who surrounded her, there were two factors: one was an insight penetrating into the very marrow of the inner nature; the other was an abounding generosity toward their personalities, with whatever gifts they might possess. In the finest sense, all her geese were swans: a royal generosity in dealing with her friends, with a devotion beyond measure for the Sacred Science to which she had given her whole life, for what we may briefly describe as Theosophy.

One gift more, which crowns and surmounts all else: she had the power, which she had earned by sacrifice, toil, discipline, aspiration, to reach her Master, her Masters, wherever she might be. Dwelling in Italy, France, England, Amer-

ica, she dwelt at the same time on the Himalayan peaks. Not for an hour, not for a moment, did she lose the vivid, open-eyed knowledge of the Masters.

There was at one time an idea, among some of those who were interested in the Theosophical Society in a dilettante way, that the Masters for whom Mme. Blavatsky worked were spirits, and that she was a medium in the Spiritualist sense. Certain evidence strongly militates against this: she dwelt in the house of a Master, with whom his sister and her child were living, and Mme. Blavatsky spoke of this Master as walking about the room in riding dress, and then going on a journey. So far as one has heard, this is not like the experience of a medium with spirits! Her Masters were solid reality. She knew them personally as men, but as men divine and glorified. Gaining, in that period of learning and discipline, the profound experience of initiation, and, with it, the power to remain continuously in the presence of the Masters; coming to Europe from Tibet, coming to America to found The Theosophical Society, she kept that full, unbroken touch with the Masters, and, in virtue of that power, directed by that power, founded, with others, The Theosophical Society,—W. Q. Judge towering above the rest of those who co-operated with her.

Thus Mme. Blavatsky brought to the western world, fifty years ago, a living knowledge of living Masters. In a certain sense, to speak of a living Master is to use a word too many. Since Masters are such because they are blended with the very essence of Eternal Life, there can be no such thing as a Master who is not living: a Master once, a Master for ever, an endless, eternal life. Therefore, when we, as students of Theosophy, see or hear discussions regarding the Master Christ, where he was born, in what year, some nineteen centuries ago, and whether or not certain events related of him are historical, we ardently desire to impart to those who are his genuine followers our conviction that the Master lives, and lives for ever. For a student of Theosophy, the resurrection is not something that is possible or even probable; it is something that is inevitable owing to the very nature of a Master. If he be a Master, he is alive, in the real and eternal sense. And to dwell for a moment on the teaching of the Master Christ: the essence of his teaching deals with this very thing, the birth of the spiritual man, and the growth of the spiritual man to the stature of a Master. What did he mean, one wonders what his devout but not always enlightened followers think he meant, when he said to the ruler of the Jews, "Except a man be born from above, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"? The thought was so strange to the earlier translators, that they have missed the meaning. The primary sense of the Greek word, *anothen*, is, "from above," while the secondary meaning is "again"; the earlier translators, not fully understanding, gave the secondary meaning; the revisers give the primary meaning, but in the margin. The Master himself made perfectly clear what he meant, when he expanded the phrase, and spoke of "that which is born of the Spirit." In the fifteenth chapter of his first letter to the disciples at Corinth, Paul tells the whole story of the birth from above: what is born, into what it grows, is set forth clearly, in scientific language. Except a man

be born from above, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven,—the kingdom of heaven being the spiritual realm which we have already spoken of as the Oversoul. Except a man be born from above, he cannot enter the life of the Oversoul. Surely, as clear as possible.

In parable after parable, the Master Christ speaks of the kingdom of heaven. I think that only the Sacred Science, only Theosophy, makes intelligible what he means. The flood of light which it sheds on the entire teaching of the Master Christ, and on every sentence of his teaching, especially the most enigmatic, is one of the vital facts to which the world has not yet awakened; we think the safety of Christendom depends on that awakening, which should not be long delayed. Seek through Theosophy what that Master really meant; seek rather what he means, for we know nothing of a dead Master. We know of a living Master, of living Masters, in their degrees of grandeur and of splendour.

To the Church, therefore, the Theosophical Movement has this to offer: a real understanding of the Church's mission, of the whole teaching of the Master Christ; a living understanding that is a part of our record, attained and maintained through these fifty years.

While the years have been passing, the world has not been standing still. Certain elements have been growing deeper, purer, more luminous. Other elements, more conspicuous, have been going from bad to worse. The keynote of this age of ours is anarchy based on egotism, self-worship,—an ugly thing, a deadly thing. Much is said in these latter days regarding liberty; much of it is an illusion. Many people mean, by liberty, untrammelled opportunity to worship themselves, to do what they please; the pursuit of their appetites, inclinations,—indulgence without limit. It is time that someone should say: This is not the path of liberty, it is the path of bondage. No man, or woman, or child, who is obedient to egotism, to self-indulgence, who thinks that life is given for the expression and expansion of these things, is anything but a bond-slave, manacled and fettered. Such a one, steeped in self-indulgence, has never breathed a breath of liberty. Not in that way is liberty found.

Quite other things are to be found there. When little men, or little women, worship their little selves, since egotism is a very weak thing, a very small thing, the results are, not unnaturally, small and weak and offensive, pitiably cheap and vulgar. So much in this age of ours is cheap and vulgar. It is an age of disintegration. There is nothing in these contending egotisms to bind them together. They must disintegrate: and they do disintegrate, in offensive ways. It is not necessary to cite illustrations,—that would be superfluous. We all have eyes. We need not read more than a few paragraphs of our newspapers, to become aware of this cheapness and vulgarity. In almost everything there recorded, we find uncleanness and corruption, the pervading activity of self-seeking and self-indulgence. These things, in a civilization, as we are pleased to call it, lead one way and one way only. They lead to destruction. Perhaps some day, ten thousand years hence, the sages

and historians will be debating, whether many of our modern lands were not mere myths, as some of our historians say of the lost Atlantis, which, because of its corruption, was engulfed in the ocean. Some of them think of Atlantis as a solar myth. We are more likely to be classed as a lunar myth. Our spotted satellite, "the moon that maketh mad," is the fit patron for us.

Just because the need of our age is so great, the work of The Theosophical Society is vitally important. Desperate maladies call for desperate remedies. In that sense, we are a desperate remedy. This task is something more than the duty of each one of us. It is a spiritual necessity—imposed upon us, not as separate selves, but as a part of spiritual humanity—to foresee this disintegration of our society, our civilization so-called, and to do what we can to save at least a remnant. There are splendid possibilities. We remember, some eight years ago, when this country was entering the World War and during the months that immediately followed,—we remember the superb ideal, the aspiration, the thrill of anger for outraged righteousness; the willingness to give up little things, the little self-denials which nevertheless loom large in the moral world; we remember the greater sacrifices, men willingly, gladly, triumphantly offering life itself, meeting with a smile the likelihood of being blown by high explosives into the blue ether, and knowing that that would be altogether well. These splendid possibilities live still, though they have been so thickly overlaid.

Sir Philip Gibbs has written a book in which he speaks of a spiritual collapse following the war. The phrase is painfully near the truth. We need a spiritual regeneration, a regeneration of those spiritual elements and powers in life which Masters teach and exemplify. This is the real purpose, the duty, the mission of the Theosophical Movement. Is this purpose alien to the interest of anyone here? Are there any here who can say, and honestly say, that the future spiritual life of humanity is not their concern? Are there any who cannot respond both to the dire necessity, the call for service, and to the thrilling summons of the Masters, to work, not for ourselves, but with complete self-forgetting? A Master has said, a living Master, that there is not one of them but is willing to be crucified daily, if he can thereby do any real good to another. That is the spirit in which Masters work and serve. Nothing but the guidance of the Masters, and the spiritual powers revealed in them, can save our age from deep damnation. The elements of corruption are active, far and wide, disintegrating forces of anarchy, which of necessity do not bind together, but tear apart. Only the healing, illumining power of spiritual life can bring the remedy.

One of the laws of spiritual life is this, that abstract spirit cannot act in human life. It must be embodied in a human being, the splendid truth of the Incarnation, which is so little understood. The Word must become flesh before it can dwell among us. Therefore it is not enough to say that there are abstract spiritual powers which are present, ready to work for man's redemption. They must be made concrete. They must be embodied in us, as they are in our Masters. We must ourselves respond. We must ourselves

learn, first the alphabet, and then the following chapters of the great spiritual science. We must learn what our powers are; in what conditions they can develop; how they should be rightly used. These are the problems with which The Theosophical Society is constantly concerned, with the purpose, for most of us a defined, clearly realized purpose, of co-operating with the Masters in the work of human salvation.

So we have our vision, we have our opportunity, we have our superb exemplars, beginning with Mme. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge. What response are we going to make? If we do respond, with the aspiration of an ardent heart, what can we do? What concrete action can we take? Perhaps we can find a good illustration in the French students of art, in an older Paris, when it was the tradition, as it may be still, that a student should try to do his best work in order to be admitted to the studio of a master. There is much that we may learn from the lives of those true devotees of art. They did not give with the tips of their fingers. They gave their whole lives. They devoted to their task every thought, every power, with imagination illumined by what they sought to do. They began by seeking a worthy master, and, putting themselves under his guidance, in his studio, to learn from him all they could. There is the same devotion among true students of science. The student does not give himself by halves. He gives his life, and then proceeds to learn the alphabet of his science from the masters of that science, to study their methods, to saturate himself with their spirit, to catch, so far as he can, their vision; to see, if it be astronomy, their vistas of limitless space; if it be geology, their vision of unmeasured time, inspiring himself with their enthusiasm for that science. We must do the same. We must give, not part of our time, some share of our attention, what we can readily spare from other concerns. Nothing less than all will avail: the whole life, the whole nature, the whole being, aspiration, will, love, every power. That is the only real service, and it can be rendered no matter what the outer circumstances of a man's life may be.

Mme. Blavatsky died in 1891. A few years before she died, she wrote *The Key to Theosophy*. A day or two ago, I was looking over this book, a gift from her, and reading the last pages: "What of the future of the Theosophical Society?" She was looking forward through the years to the time when The Theosophical Society should have completed a century of its life, and considering what the situation might be, in 1975, if success were attained and the Movement continued uninterrupted. She spoke of the age-old law that, in the last quarter of each century, the Lodge of Masters of Wisdom moves in a definite way to bring wisdom to mankind, to bring spiritual knowledge, spiritual life, spiritual power. Speaking of the Messenger whose coming in 1975 she foretold, she said that, if the Movement succeeded, he would find certain things ready to his hand, which would immensely lighten his task. Among these were an organized body of students of Theosophy, a rich literature of theosophical studies, and, as she hoped, something more of the light of Theosophy in the world at large, more of theosophical wisdom, more of the theosophical spirit.

If anyone here, who may never have heard of The Theosophical Society before, should ask, catching something of the light from beyond the hills: "What can I do?"—one might reply that a part at least of what Mme. Blavatsky hoped for has been accomplished, and that this is one of the reasons why we are celebrating our fiftieth birthday. There is an organized body of students of Theosophy who have given their lives to its service; who have followed it through dark days, through brighter days; who have made it their life work. I think that these students would say that, while in the nineteenth century there were many great and noteworthy persons, so far as they can see, of all those who were known among men, Mme. Blavatsky will stand as far the greatest. That can only be decided centuries hence, but it is the firm conviction of some of us that she, who brought to the western world the knowledge of living Masters, is the greatest. She has built the bridge; it is for us to keep it in repair. Hardly less great was W. Q. Judge; taking the torch from her hand, he bore it valorously forward; a man strong and wise as he was humble, full of the kindest, humane spirit, wiser than the wisest, gentler than the gentlest, with the starry wisdom on his brow.

We have, therefore, a living tradition, a literature of theosophical books, an organized Society of students of Theosophy: so much of what Mme. Blavatsky forecast for 1975, exists, firmly established in 1925. Those who seek may find.

I think that students of Theosophy would say to the seeker: Do not let the goal of your search be anything less than the wisdom of the Masters, and the Masters themselves. Let your motive be what the motive of the Masters is, what it has ever been, what it will be until the day of the great peace: the redemption of spiritual humanity. That is our task. That is our goal. That is the undertaking which, so far as human frailty allows, we are determined to accomplish. We are determined that The Theosophical Society shall be, in 1975, what Mme. Blavatsky declared that it ought to be. So that, while we celebrate a fiftieth anniversary, we do not count ourselves to have attained. We have reached a point where we can really begin. We may perhaps borrow a watchword from the Dean of Seville, who said, in the year 1401, of the beginning of the magnificent cathedral:

"Let us build a thing so great that those who come after us may think us mad to have attempted it."

A VIEW OF ELEMENTALS

THE word, "elemental," is often used as a synonym for "psychic complex," as when the lower nature is called a "congeries of elementals." But this is a special use of a general term, a particular application to human nature of an idea equally applicable to every phase of Cosmic Nature.

As long as there is manifestation, and to the extent that there is manifestation, all being is polarized and assumes two aspects. At one pole is the Self, the Monad, *natura naturans*, the noumenon, the creative power; at the other pole is the non-self, the Dyad, *natura naturata*, the phenomenon, the product of the creative power. The source of all consciousness and of all substance is in the Self, in the Divine Will, so that the phenomenon, the creature, has only a borrowed or reflected existence. Such relative reality as it has, is given by the Self and may be withdrawn by the Self.

In an abstract and general sense, anything that is created is an elemental, whether its creator be divine or human or demoniacal. For an elemental is nothing but a form embodying some purpose of the creative power. This is demonstrably true of human elementals; is it not also true of the so-called Nature-Elementals which are said to inform the stars and planets and atoms and the lower principles of all organic beings from the Protista to Man?

In terms of such a broad definition, it is unreasonable to regard elementals *per se* as malignant or useless things, for they appear to be designed as the medium disclosing to the Self the reality of Its being through the three-fold mystery of creation, preservation and destruction. If some elementals, with which we are personally acquainted, fail to achieve that design, the fault must rest in some perversion of the creative power manifesting through them. An elemental is never a cause, but always an effect. It is a medium, a vehicle of creation, preservation and destruction, as we may discern by examining our mental consciousness, in which these three processes are always taking place.

Take, for example, some mental operation from which emotion is virtually absent, such an operation as may be illustrated by the faculty of ordinary perception. Thus, looking out through the eyes of the body, I see a tree. The optic nerve conveys to the brain a complex of vibrations originating outside my personal being, and the mind translates the complex into a visible shape which I attribute to the source of the vibrations. Of course, I only see with my physical eyes a part of the real tree, a fragment which belongs to the same three-dimensional scale as my physical consciousness. Bergson has described our sense-perceptions as representations of all the possible ways in which our bodies can act and move, so that we only see what is necessary for action. Omniscience is impossible without omnipotence.

This perception of a tree may generate a mind-image, an elemental, a more

or less enduring memory. But this is possible only if I lend will and attention to the perception, if I become interested in it, if I desire to understand it; otherwise, when the external stimulus is removed, it will disappear from consciousness. Suppose that I am a student of botany, eager to know the species of the tree, and that after attentively examining the leaves and bark, I identify it as a sugar maple. If I see another sugar maple next week, I shall recognize it promptly, for I shall be able to refer to the present experience, which will have become a memory.

An elemental is, therefore, an inevitable product of the interaction of will, imagination and desire. It is an incarnation, a manifestation of creative or imaginative force, and it preserves a vehicle for that force upon the plane of personal consciousness. In the presence of some experience analogous to that which brought it into existence and of which it is a memory, the elemental is drawn by a sort of induction out of the "subconscious." But no memory can thus become conscious without destroying itself and transmitting its life to a new and larger memory. Its content of imaginative force, its *sakti*, is instantaneously released, to strengthen and to make more intelligible its successor. In this way, each elemental, each memory in a series, passes through a process of creation, preservation and destruction, and signifies an increase of power and an enrichment of consciousness, since it gathers into itself all the elementals which have preceded it. The mystery of memory is an aspect of the mystery of creation.

Throughout Nature we observe this law. There can be no form which is not modelled upon past forms or which does not itself serve as a prototype for the future. The world is an orderly process, providing for the assimilation of the past by the future, of the less evolved by the more evolved, so as to establish a hierarchy, in which each entity contains the collective consciousness of the host beneath it.

So far, so good. But the creative power is not necessarily good in all its phases. Goodness, the perfect conscious attunement of the individual with the Universal, must be achieved by the will and choice of the individual. Evil, the heresy of separateness or egotism, is always possible so long as an individual being has not finally aligned its imaginative force with the purpose of the One Self. And the power to create, to preserve and to destroy, is not limited to the individual that is good.

We need not search far, to find an example of wrong creation. Assume that I am no longer a botanist contemplating a maple-tree; that I have a weakness for maple-sugar. It is obvious that a maple-tree will then convey a quite different meaning to my consciousness.

Let us contrast these two, the botanist and the sugar addict.

As a botanist, if I be at all worthy of the name, I desire Truth. My mental-emotional nature must be subject to my determination to *accept* the Truth as it is; I must be *willing* to sacrifice every predilection and preconception. Otherwise I shall not be desiring Truth, but only the confirmation of some prejudice. The history of science is a story of the struggle of the spiritual

intellect to subject the brain-mind,—not to destroy it, for its coöperation is indispensable, but to control its action. Unless the scientist can say as his daily prayer, "Let Truth prevail, though my heavens fall," he will not create new knowledge; for only the spiritual intellect, which loves the eternal verities, can reveal them. He who seeks the invisible within the visible, must become a self-conscious embodiment of Truth Itself, as this is reflected in his powers of desire, imagination and will.

But if I become a sugar addict, I reverse the polarity. Desire, imagination and will are no longer subject to Truth but to the impulses of the mental-emotional nature, which my personality has inherited from aeons of animal life. In other words, my self-consciousness is in the wrong place; I identify myself with a part of my being which is not *per se* immortal, and which can be immortalized only in so far as it can be brought into subjection to the purposes of the Soul.

Certain results follow. The image-making power, acting as the agent of the lower nature, cannot be dissociated from the objects which it creates. The forces released from a mental mould by an act of memory are not assimilated by some new and more perfect form, but are, in a sense, turned back upon themselves, being crystallized into habits and automatisms, to which the attention, the dynamic centre of consciousness, is fastened. Experience can then only be repeated; there is no progression. The creative power weaves for itself, by wrong self-identification, a vesture of animal appetites.

The normal animal nature is an elemental, the collective consciousness of many elementals. But the human animal is an elemental to which the Soul has delegated its most precious right, the power self-consciously to remember, to imagine, to desire, to will, to choose, to love. This elemental which the self imagines itself to be, is no longer an animal but a monster, a thing contrary to Nature, an embodiment of egotism and illusion. As Pythagoras said, the Soul then dwells in the body as in a tomb.

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me."

S. L.

However brilliant an action, it should not be esteemed great unless the result of a great motive.—La Roche.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

XV

St. Teresa

(Part II)

WHAT was there in Teresa's unpretentious little house, with its four obscure occupants, to excite vehement anger in the citizens of Avila? Why should a modest and unassuming woman arouse violent hostility among all classes of people there? Perhaps the conduct of her fellow citizens represents a simple case of reaction against the force of the Lodge manifested through a chêla.

At the Monastery of the Incarnation, she was questioned by the indignant prioress in the presence of all the nuns, the ecclesiastic who in the beginning had condemned her plan, acting as her judge. Teresa's complete humility and obedience saved her, the answers she gave satisfying her superiors, though not to such a degree that the prioress would sanction her residence at St. Joseph's. The townspeople were less easily mollified than the ecclesiastics, and for three days the fate of the new building was uncertain, as they clamoured for its demolition. Their first heat cooling somewhat, they launched a lawsuit, insisting that she vacate the building which had been erected with her own funds—an extreme penalty from which she was saved through the friendly interposition of a sympathetic Dominican who, while he did not know her personally, was convinced of her sincerity, and, in the law court, pointed out to the excited plaintiffs the path of rectitude that she had unswervingly followed. The lawsuit dragged along for six months, and then died, as the citizens were gradually appeased, and became as warm in demonstrations of friendship as they had been aggressive in hostility. As a crowning act of sympathy, the friendly Dominican persuaded the Carmelite officials to transfer Teresa's ecclesiastical residence from the Incarnation to St. Joseph's, and when she was ready to act upon that transfer, a further concession was granted —she might invite four fellow-nuns to accompany her to the new house,—an invitation that was gladly accepted. The reconciliation seemed complete.

Thus, before Easter of 1563, Teresa with eight companions (the four novices, and the four nuns who accompanied her from the Incarnation) was settled in her own convent, the house which had cost her so much labour and anxiety. Thirteen years later, writing her book, the *Foundations*, she says of that experience: "I remained five years, after its foundation, in the house of St. Joseph, Avila, and I believe, so far as I can see at present, that they were the most tranquil years of my life, the calm and rest of which my soul very often greatly misses."[1] She comments also, with warm praise, upon the zeal and obedience

[1] *Foundations*, p. 409.

of her associates: "I charged one with half a dozen duties, inconsistent with each other, all of which she accepted without saying a word, thinking it possible for her to discharge them." [2] From that tranquil life with zealous friends, Teresa was drawn by a commission from no less a personage than Rossi, the Carmelite general, who asked her to undertake in other towns the formation of communities to observe the primitive rule. Such a request from the general-in-chief could be interpreted in only one way—as a vindication of her faith and courage, and a declaration of her success.

Rossi, who resided in Rome, had come into Spain in 1566, by the king's invitation, to supervise at closer range the affairs of the Spanish communities. In the course of his visitation, he reached Avila, and, during a stay there, received St. Joseph's convent in amicable surrender from the bishop, thus bringing Teresa and her nuns within Carmelite jurisdiction. When informed of the unintelligent opposition of his Castilian subordinate whose unfavourable attitude had driven Teresa to the expedient of seeking the bishop's aid, Rossi was greatly annoyed, and, in reparation for the injustice she had suffered, and to manifest publicly his approval, he gave her authorization, signed and sealed, for further communities. She was deeply gratified by this approbation, and, in expressing her thanks, begged the general to sanction communities of friars as well as of nuns, to which he assented, though he limited the prospective houses for men to two in number, specifying that all her communities should be within the province of Castile, and none in the neighbouring province of Andalusia.

For eight years, until 1575, she was actively engaged in the work of that commission. She went from place to place in Castile, usually after receiving an invitation with more or less urgence from a noble or an ecclesiastic.

Obstacles of some kind were encountered in every undertaking. When a gift of building and equipment seemed to smooth her path, to offset that obvious advantage, hardship of another kind inevitably made its appearance, as at Pastrana, twenty-five miles east of Madrid, where the Princess of Eboli offered a house. The Princess's husband was lord treasurer of Spain and also a close friend of the King, and Teresa was not blind to the advantage such a connection might be, should persecution come. No sooner was the offer accepted than trouble began, for, in the vocabulary of the imperious Princess, to give and to order were synonyms, and while Teresa was humble and punctiliously obedient to all in authority over her, she was also conscientious and courageous, and would not brook unwarranted interference in a work that was her Master's. Friction began when Teresa checked the effort of the Princess to place personal friends in the convent as novices, and another delicate situation arose when the Princess asked for the narrative of inner experiences which Teresa had written at her confessor's bidding. Though the lady did not seem trustworthy, the manuscript was given to her after she had vowed absolute silence as to the private and sacred matters which it contained,—a vow that

[2] *Foundations*, p. 410.

proved ineffectual, for, laughing at what she could not understand, she carelessly left the written sheets where they were read by servants who gossipped about them as the hallucinations of a witch. The connection with so dictatorial and fickle a person could be of short duration only, and the manner in which it came to an end is briefly told as follows by one of Teresa's early editors. "On the death of the Prince of Eboli, the Princess would become a nun in her monastery of Pastrana. The first day she had a fit of violent fervour; on the next she relaxed the rule; on the third she broke it, and conversed with secular people within the cloisters. She was also so humble that she required the nuns to speak to her on their knees, and insisted upon their receiving into the house as religious whomsoever she pleased. Hereupon complaints were made to St. Teresa who remonstrated with the Princess, and showed her how much she was in the wrong, whereupon she replied that the monastery was hers; but the Saint proved to her that the nuns were not, and had them removed at once to Segovia."[3] Infuriated by the check to her self-will, the Princess sought revenge by denouncing Teresa's narrative to the Inquisition, but, contrary to expectation, this appeal to the dreaded tribunal proved advantageous in the end to Teresa, as of the commissioners appointed by the Inquisition to inquire into her narrative and conduct, one (luckily, or providentially?) was that very Dominican, Bañez, who was so singularly drawn to defend her at Avila, when St. Joseph's was under attack. His official pronouncement is written in the blank space at the end of Teresa's manuscript, where it can still be read, a rare example of sincere good will in a theologian. His expression is moderate, and he is careful to point out that possible error *might* lurk in what she had done and written; but his caution and discretion only add weight to his explicit declaration that the doctrines illustrated by her experience are thoroughly wholesome. A few examples of his fairness and open-mindedness deserve quotation. "I have not found anywhere in it anything which, in my opinion, is erroneous in doctrine. On the contrary, there are many things in it highly edifying and instructive for those who give themselves to prayer. The great experience of this religious, her discretion also and her humility, which made her always seek for light and learning in her confessors, enabled her to speak with an accuracy on the subject of prayer that the most learned men, through their want of experience, have not always attained to. Judging by the revelations made to her, this woman, even though she may be deceived in something, is at least not herself a deceiver, because she tells all the good and the bad so simply, and with so great a wish to be correct, that no doubt can be made as to her good intention. I have always proceeded cautiously in the examination of this account of the prayer and life of this nun, and no one has been more incredulous than myself as to her visions and revelations,—not so, however, as to her goodness and her good desires, for herein I have had great experience of her truthfulness, her obedience, mortification, patience, and charity towards her persecutors, and of her other virtues, which any one who

[3] *Life*, Preface, p. XXXV.

will converse with her will discern; and this is what may be regarded as a more certain proof of her real love of God than these visions and revelations. I do not, however, undervalue her visions, revelations, and ecstasies; on the contrary, I suspect them to be the work of God, as they have been in others who were Saints. I am of opinion that this book is not to be shown to every one, but only to men of learning, experience, and Christian discretion."[4] Teresa was so deeply grateful for this second championing of her cause by Bañez that she used to speak of him, playfully, as the founder of her convents.

Rough as her pathway was, there were spots of solace, and one of those was St. John—St. John of the Cross. She first met him at Medina in 1567, after she had opened her heart to an old prior, telling him of her longing to form a community of friars. The old man had immediately volunteered as a candidate, and mentioned as another possible adherent, a fervent young novice, John Matthew, who had just taken his vows. Teresa doubted the prior's physical fitness, on account of advanced age, so deferring acceptance of his offer, she asked to see the youthful monk. John Matthew was just twenty-five. The rule of his Carmelite monastery did not afford sufficient opportunity to his ardour, and he was preparing to join the stricter Carthusians, when he was won by Teresa's fervour, and he agreed to enter her monastery, if she would open one without delay. With complete detachment from the false prestige of numbers, she answered that a start would be made when there were two suitable candidates. A year passing, however, before direct action could be taken, the prior used it as a probationary period, showing himself equal to the austere requirements. A beginning was then made feasible through the donation of a small outbuilding at Duruelo,—a hamlet of twenty souls to the west of Avila. In her account of what was done there, she calls the out-building a house (she had to be guarded in her words, never knowing who might read them); but her reserved comments give the impression that it was a ramshackle cowshed rather than a house, as she would not enter it on account of its filth, when she went to investigate her new possession. She was entirely frank with the prior and with John Matthew about its condition, but her candour could not dampen their zeal—their reply being that they were ready to live in a pigsty, if, by so doing, they could more closely imitate Christ's life of self-denial and sacrifice. As no fund was available for an outfit, Teresa had to tell the prior to be sparing in his purchases, an injunction which the old man heeded literally, for he bought five hour-glasses to assure due marking of the Canonical Hours, and he bought nothing else, not even straw for bedding. In September, 1568, John Matthew went to the cowshed, vesting in the habit of the primitive Carmelites, and taking as his monastic name, John of the Cross. For two months he was solitary, since business, attendant upon his resignation of office, detained the prior at Medina; but at last he, too, came, bringing a companion, and thus the longed-for house of friars was realized. In the eloquent story of her visit to them (which follows), Teresa aptly called the

[4] *Life*, Preface, p. XXXVII ff.

place a Bethlehem, because the flame of love which burned in that shed made it appear to her like Christ's manger. Her words, "church" and "choir," must not mislead, as long habit brought these terms quite naturally to her to distinguish the parts of the shed where Mass and the Canonical Hours were respectively observed. The true condition of the place may be inferred from the mention of snow falling through the cracks upon the men's garments as they knelt in prayer. She writes thus: "On the first or second Sunday in Advent of the year 1568—I do not remember which of the two Sundays it was—the first Mass was said in that little porch of Bethlehem; I do not think it was any better. In the following Lent I passed by on my way to Toledo for the foundation there. I arrived one morning; Fra Antonio of Jesus [the former prior] was sweeping the door of the church with a joyful countenance, which he ever preserves. I said to him, 'What is this, father?—what has become of your dignity?' He replied in these words, showing the great joy he was in: 'I execrate the time wherein I had any.' As I went into the church I was amazed to see the spirit which our Lord had inspired there; and I was not the only one, for two merchants, friends of mine, who had come with me from Medina, did nothing but cry, there were so many crosses, so many skulls! I can never forget one little cross of wood by the holy water to which a picture of Christ on paper was fastened; it seemed to cause more devotion than if it had been made of some material most admirably fashioned. The choir was the garret, which was lofty in the centre, so that they could say the office in it, but they had to stoop very low to enter it and hear Mass. In the two corners of it next the church they had two little hermitages[5] filled with hay, for the place was very cold, in which they must either lie down or sit; the roof almost touched their heads. There were two little openings into the church, and two stones for pillows; there were also crosses and skulls. I understood that when matins were over they did not go back to their cells till prime but remained here in prayer, in which they were so absorbed that they went and said prime when the time came, having their habits covered with snow, but they did not know it. They used to go out to preach in many places around where the people needed instruction, and that also made me glad that the house was established there, for I was told that there was no monastery near, nor the means of supporting one, which was a great pity. They gained so good a name in so short a time as to give me the very greatest pleasure when I heard of it. They went as I am saying, a league and a half and two leagues barefooted to preach—for at that time they wore no sandals which they were afterwards ordered to wear—and that in the cold, when the snow was deep, and when they had preached and heard confessions came home very late to their meal in the monastery: all this was as nothing because of their joy."[6]

The settlement at Duruelo is a very happy incident in the nine years of itinerancy that followed upon the tranquil period at St. Joseph's, though her com-

[5] Another euphemism. Hermitage was the name used in a monastery for a secluded place of retreat. Often it was an arbour or grotto in the cloister garden.

[6] *Foundations*, pp. 482 ff.

mission to establish new houses brought much joy as well as varying degrees of hardship. With 1575, however, there began a five year period of grave anxiety that must have dwarfed some of her earlier impressions, casting doubt as it did upon the stability and permanence of her reforms. For two years of that period, though she was not incarcerated, she was virtually a prisoner within the convent at Toledo;[7] and John of the Cross was actually imprisoned for nine months in a filthy cell.[8] The uncertain fate of her houses, the persecution of her friends, the charges brought against them and against her, made it a time of martyrdom. The history of that period is much involved, and cannot be given here. It was the age-old contest between zealous reform and the established order, complicated by political and personal feelings, and by questions of jurisdiction between contending ecclesiastical authorities.

During the five years of altercation, Teresa was forbidden to make any establishment, but when peace was restored, her foundations were recognized as an independent jurisdiction, thus crowning her work with success, and making it possible for her to dedicate several more houses for women in the northern part of Spain. Sometimes, she is mistakenly credited with founding additional houses for men also, which, in truth, represent the effort of associates to extend the ranks of the Discalced friars. She continued her journeys and her work until a few days before her death, which took place in 1582. "Oh, my Lord," she prayed as she lay dying, "now is the time, now is the hour when we shall see each other. My tender Lord behold the hour when I come. It is time for me to leave this place of exile; time for my soul to be made one with Thee; to enjoy all that it has desired."

C. C. CLARK.

[7] "I have been informed of the decree which forbids my leaving the convent in which I reside. . . . He thought it would wound me deeply as these fathers intended that it should." *Letters*, I, p. 249. *Foundations*, ch. XXVII, par. 18.

[8] "The treatment undergone by John of the Cross is ever in my thoughts. During the whole of the nine months he was imprisoned in a cell hardly large enough to hold him, small as he is, and for all that time he never changed his tunic, though he was almost dying." *Letters*, III, p. 147.

Be what you wish others to become. Let yourself and not your words preach for you.—AMIEL.

VAKYA SUDHA
THE ESSENCE OF THE TEACHING

ATTRIBUTED TO SHANKARA ACHARYA

THE power of vision in the eye sees form; the mind sees the power of vision in the eye; spiritual consciousness, the Witness, sees the changing moods of the mind; but spiritual consciousness is seen of none.

The power of vision in the eye, remaining single, beholds manifold forms, whether blue or yellow, gross or subtile, short or long.

The mind, remaining single, recognizes differing characteristics of the eyes, whether blind, or dim, or keen. The same thing is true of the other powers of perception, like hearing and touch.

In the same way, the spiritual consciousness perceives the differing characteristics of the mind, such as desire, imagination, doubt, faith, disbelief, firmness, indecision, shame, understanding, fear.

Spiritual consciousness neither rises nor sets, neither waxes nor wanes; self-luminous, it illumines the other powers, without using any instrument or means. (5)

When the ray or reflection of spiritual consciousness penetrates and pervades the mind, the mind is illumined with consciousness; the mind has two forms: the personal sense of "I," and the instrument of thinking.

The ray or reflection of spiritual consciousness is infused into the personal sense of "I" as radiant heat is infused into a lump of red-hot iron. As the personal sense of "I" is infused into the body, the body acquires sensibility and consciousness.

The sense of "I" is manifested in the three: in the mental reflection of spiritual consciousness, in the body, and in the Witness. It is innate in the mental reflection of spiritual consciousness; in the body, it is the result of works done with attachment to the body; in the Witness, it arises through the illusion of separateness.

Since the sense of "I" is inherent in the mental reflection of spiritual consciousness, it remains in it. The attribution of the sense of "I" to the body ceases when works done with attachment to the body cease. As the sense of separateness in the Witness, it ceases when illumination is attained.

When the sense of "I" dissolves, the man goes to sleep, and the body becomes unconscious; when the sense of "I" is half awake, the man dreams; when it is fully manifested, he is awake. (10)

When the sense ot "I" is manifested in the mental reflection of spiritual consciousness during dream, it evokes the mind-images of dreams; when it

is manifested in waking, it evokes attraction toward objects of sense perception.

The body of form is compounded of the sense of "I" and the mind; it is essentially material; it enters the three fields of consciousness, waking, dreaming, dreamlessness; it is subject to birth and death.

Maya, World Glamour, has two modes of activity: expansive dispersion, and veiling through limitation. The power of expansive dispersion brings all things into manifestation, from the body of form to the sphere of the Cosmos.

This creative manifestation is the cause of individualized existence, expressing itself as name and form, in the Eternal, which is in reality undivided being, consciousness and bliss; just as in water are manifested individual bubbles and foam, with their names and forms.

The other power of Glamour, the power which veils through limitation, acts to hinder the inner discernment between the perceiving spiritual consciousness and the manifold mental states which are perceived, and to hinder the outer discernment between the Eternal and the manifested worlds. This power is the cause of recurring birth and death. (15)

When the light of the Witness, entering the body of form as a ray or reflection of the spiritual consciousness, is united with it, the ordinary self comes into being.

So long as the Witness, the Spiritual Self, is held by the power of delusion, it identifies itself with the ordinary self; when the power that veils and limits is overcome, the distinction is perceived, and the Spiritual Self is revealed.

In the same way, when the power that veils and limits is overcome, the Eternal is revealed as distinct from the appearance of the manifested world, and it is perceived that change belongs to the manifested world and not to the Eternal.

There are these five: being, light, joy, name and form. The first three are the properties of the Eternal; the last two are the properties of the manifested world.

In the five elements, ether, air, fire, water, earth, and in gods, animals and men, being, consciousness and bliss are undivided, while name and form only are divided. (20)

Therefore, setting aside these two, name and form, and intent upon being, consciousness and bliss, let the disciple practise spiritual contemplation concerning both what is in the heart within, and what is without.

The contemplation in the heart within has two degrees: the lower, where the sense of separateness is present, and the higher, above the sense of separateness.

Contemplation with a sense of separateness has again two degrees: the penetration of the meaning of mind-images or forms, and the penetration of the meaning of words or names.

The contemplation with a sense of separateness which penetrates the meaning of mind-images is a viewing of the images of desire and fear in the light of the Witness, the spiritual consciousness.

A realization of the truth by affirming that "I am being, consciousness, bliss, free from attachment, luminous, undivided," is the contemplation which penetrates the meaning of words. (25)

When the disciple, rising above mind-images and words, enters into the essence of immediate spiritual experience, this is contemplation without the sense of separateness, in which the Spirit is quiet as a lamp flame in a windless place.

As there are three degrees of contemplation within the heart, so there are the same three stages regarding any outward thing. The setting aside of distinctions of form, and the recognition that it is Being only, is the first, the contemplation with the sense of separateness, which penetrates the meaning of outward appearances.

The affirmation and recognition that the outward object is in reality partless essence of Being, whose properties are being, consciousness, bliss, is the contemplation of outward things which penetrates the meaning of words.

Contemplation of outward things without the sense of separateness is a steadfast condition of the Spirit which directly experiences the essence of the Eternal. Let the disciple give himself continually to these six degrees of contemplation.

When the false attribution of selfhood to the body has been completely destroyed, and the Supreme Self is realized, then, in whatever direction the mind may turn, these stages of contemplation will arise. (30)

The knot of the heart is severed, all doubts are solved, the bonds of works are destroyed, for him who has beheld the Supreme Eternal: thus the Scripture declares.

Three forms of Life are to be known: first, the Eternal appearing as the individual, which is the Higher Self; second, the ray or reflection of spiritual consciousness in the body of form, which is the personal self; third, the self built up of dreams. The first is the eternal, transcendent reality.

The limitation of the Eternal as the individual is built up by the illusion of unwisdom, through which the Eternal appears to be limited. In the individuality, the limitation is superimposed by the power of unwisdom; in reality, the individual is the Eternal.

The essential oneness of the individual life with the infinite Eternal is taught in such Scriptural sayings as, "That thou art." This essential oneness is not true of the other two forms, namely, the personal self and the self of dreams.

In the Eternal, Maya, World Glamour, exists in two forms: the power of expansive dispersion, and the power which veils through limitation. By veiling the partless infinitude of the Eternal, this power builds up the separate world and the separate life. (35)

The ray or reflection of spiritual consciousness in the body of form is the experiencer, the doer of works. This whole phenomenal world is the field of its experiencer.

The immemorial division between the experiencer and the world of experi-

ence continues until final liberation is attained. Thus the self of habitual activity confronts the habitual world.

Dream, in which also the two powers of expansive dispersion and veiling through limitation are active, spreads itself over the ray or reflection of spiritual consciousness; veiling the habitual self and the habitual world, it builds up a new self and a new world.

As these last only so long as dreaming lasts, they are called the apparitional self and the apparitional world; the same dream self and dream world do not recur after the man has once awakened from his dream.

The apparitional self believes the apparitional world to be real; but, once the man is awake, the habitual self knows that the dream self and the dream world are unreal. (40)

In the same way, the habitual self believes that the habitual world is real; but the real, transcendental Self knows that it is unreal.

The real, transcendental Self perceives and experiences its real, transcendental oneness with the Eternal, and perceives nothing else except the unreality of all other things.

As sweetness, fluidity, coldness, and other qualities of water enter into the wave on its surface, they likewise enter into the foam that forms on the wave.

In like manner, the being, consciousness and bliss of the spiritual consciousness, the Witness, are transmitted to the habitual self and to the dream self.

When the foam melts away, its properties, like fluidity and coldness, return to the wave; when the wave sinks to rest, these same properties return again to the water. (45)

When the dream self melts away, its properties return to the habitual self; when the habitual self melts away, its being, consciousness and bliss return to the spiritual consciousness, the Witness, the Universal Spirit.

C. J.

(*The End*)

It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man and the security of God.
—BACON.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Convention of The Theosophical Society still filled our minds and hearts to overflowing. As soon as we assembled, the Student burst out with,—

"The Convention comes first. We ought to discuss that. The 'Screen' cannot possibly reflect anything of greater interest or importance. Why not tell your readers what a member suggested at the last meeting of the New York Branch,—about compromise?"

"A good idea," said the Recorder. "Will you be good enough to refresh my memory?"

"As I recall it," the Student responded, "the speaker asked us to consider the attitude of 'No Compromise' as a possible synthesis of the message of the Convention. He pointed out that the spirit of the times, even in its better aspects, is essentially a spirit of compromise; that business is based upon it; that all political and international questions are settled avowedly on that 'principle'—after the give and take method of the trader; that the same spirit permeates every department of human life, good women compromising with the indecencies of fashion and with the laxities of servants, just as men constantly 'let things go' to save themselves time and trouble, though excusing it on the ground that 'perfection is impossible.' Having convinced us that we, too, were guilty in fifty different ways of this cardinal sin, he then spoke of the Armistice and of the Versailles Treaty as notorious instances of compromise, the chief result of which was to prolong the agony of the war, while insuring the outbreak of other and worse wars. He reminded us, however, that exactly the same mistake had been made in the past, over and over again, and that the most serious feature of the situation is that the world appears to have learned nothing, seeing that it believes sincerely that compromise is a duty among civilized people. This, he said, was flatly opposed to the principles upon which Masters, in all ages, have acted: the whole burden of Krishna's exhortations to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gîta* is, 'Do not compromise, but fight'; Christ proclaimed the impossibility of serving both God and Mammon, and acted accordingly in his treatment of the Scribes and Pharisees, of Herod, and even of his devoted follower, Peter,—while, in our own time, the uncompromising attitude of Master K. H., when asked to replace H. P. B. as Agent, must be remembered by all of us: 'ingratitude is not one of our vices,' or words to that effect. It should be clear, then, the speaker continued, that for those who desire to follow the Masters, an uncompromising attitude toward 'the world, the flesh, and the devil,' is essential. The ways of the world and its motives must be examined remorselessly, and, as was said at the Convention, we must set our faces like flint against all that is evil, vulgar, degrading,—training ourselves to distinguish sharply between

good and evil, not only in their cruder manifestations, but in such subtile matters as the difference in spirit between shades of colour, one shade perhaps the embodiment of 'jazz,' and another, a nature-colour of pure beauty."

"The speaker at that meeting said nothing of the sort," the Lawyer interrupted.

"I am glad you notice my improvements!" retorted the Student.

"Peace, peace!" the Engineer expostulated; then, turning directly to the Student, he added: "I wish you would include what was said about reading from the Book of Life, with the 'Safety First' Parade as illustration. In my own mind the two themes hang together."

"The trouble with the 'Safety First' Parade illustration is that no one outside New York would know what we were talking about—they would have no mental background of those ridiculous 'floats,' representing children being run over by automobiles and so forth, or of the huge retinue of Police and Fire Brigade and Boy Scout and Military and Naval contingents, or of the suspension of traffic on Fifth Avenue for hours while the procession marched uptown, to be reviewed, as crowning honour, by the impossible Mayor of the city."

"I can give them your sketch of it," said the Recorder, as the Student concluded his objection. "And now, again, who will refresh my memory? Suppose you continue"—addressing the Student—"for we can stop you if we don't like it!"

The Student, nothing daunted, resumed his tale:

"As I remember the meeting, we had been advised by the previous speaker to read worth-while books during the summer, not with the idea of covering as much ground as possible, but for the purpose of assimilation and digestion. Various books were mentioned—Emerson's *Essays* and Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* among them. Then came the suggestion about the Book of Life, and that we should strive ceaselessly to read it, looking to the Masters for their light on passing events. We were asked, first, to imagine a 'Safety First' parade in ancient Rome, or in Sparta! 'Safety First,' as an ideal held up to children, as an ideal honoured officially by a great city, obviously is unworthy,—is materialistic and stultifying. Looking, however, for the explanation of the phenomenon, it became evident that the cause of the parade was the desire of the individual parent to save himself trouble, and the willingness of the state or municipality, in the hope of catching votes, to assume every sort of parental or other function. It would be the duty of normal parents, not to preach 'Safety *First*,' but certainly to warn their children against the dangers of the streets and against running unnecessary risks. Too lazy to do this, or too self-indulgent to be willing to punish their children for disobedience, unless they, the parents, personally suffer from it,—they turn over their responsibility to the 'authorities,' just as they turn over the education and health of their children to one or another department of the city government. In this respect the rich are just as guilty as the poor, for the rich employ innumerable hirelings, one to perform this function, and

another, that, which parents themselves ought to perform and which they would perform except for their unwillingness to sacrifice their own pleasures. The farming-out of children is one of the surest signs of decadence, and whether they be farmed-out to foster-mothers, or to the state, or to college professors, or to expensive tutors, the sin is the same."

"You too are embroidering," protested the Lawyer.

"Best Bokhara," the Student replied cheerfully; "and if the original speaker"—pointing to him—"does not protest, why should you!" Then he continued:

"The result is described euphemistically as standardization. Children are brought up, are educated, wholesale,—just as pigs are turned into sausages in Chicago, and parts of cars and parts of chairs and tables are slapped together in Detroit or Grand Rapids. It is the modern ideal. Further, just as in the manufacture of chairs, one workman makes the front legs and another the rear legs and a third the seat and so on—none of them ever seeing or caring about the finished product, the chair itself—so the modern child is manufactured piecemeal, with a different teacher for each subject, each different teacher having a different notion of what the finished product ought to be, one trying to turn him into an Anarchist, another into a Socialist, yet another into a George Washington or an Abraham Lincoln. That it is left to no one person to teach him the importance of 'Safety First,' but that all the available forces of the Army, Navy, Police and Fire Departments are brought to bear upon him at that supreme point, is not without its significance.

"Moral: we should examine ourselves to discover if in any direction we have fallen into the modern wholesale habit, and if we have delegated responsibilities to others which we ourselves ought to be carrying. Are we, for instance, thinking for ourselves, or leaving it to others to do our thinking for us? I knew a man once who used to pray: 'Lord, please accept the prayers of all those good people as if they came from me.' He believed in prayer; he was 'all for it'; he believed in the prayers of his friends: so he waived to the Lord, as it were, and then returned to his newspaper. He was wholesale. If the Lord ever heard him, he must have laughed!"

"More Bokhara," said the Lawyer.

Then there was a pause. It lasted so long that the Recorder became worried.

"Has no one anything on his mind?" he asked.

"I have," the Philosopher responded. "Animals are on my mind. The Karma of suffering that man is piling up for himself, is enough to fill one with despair, and would do so, if it were not for faith in Masters and in their ability to hold back its sudden and terrible descent upon the human race, one's own head included. The torture which men inflict upon animals must drive the Spirit of Nature into deadly hostility, working its way into our lives—into the life of the human species—by every available channel, disease and death included.

"I was reading the other day that about two hundred old and broken-

down horses are exported every week from England to the butchers of Holland and Germany. If a horse-ship is caught in a gale, it means a pile of dead and injured at the port. Then there is the suffering of hunger and thirst—often prolonged for days—the weary tramp to death, and the brutal killing, usually by knife or hammer. The large proportion of the horses go for butchery, but some go to the bull-fights, while others are bought for the unrestricted vivisection of foreign veterinary schools, where a horse a day is given over to relays of students, who perform upon it every possible operation without anæsthetics until death ends its tortures. Blind pit ponies have gone to that fate.

"Can anything be more hideous! Should not every member of The Theosophical Society feel that animals in his own environment are a part of his responsibility; that he must protect them, and that he must do all in his power to arouse sympathy for them?"

"There can be no question about that," the Ancient commented. "It reminds me of something that the Maha Chohan is reported to have felt about Mrs. Anna Kingsford, more than forty years ago: that she was almost unendurable, but that her love for animals compelled him to endure her. Perhaps this should leave a loop-hole for us!"

Again there was a pause. "Your minds, please!" requested the Recorder.

"I have something that may have escaped the notice of your readers, and that ought to interest them," said the Orientalist. "They must know, as it is, that one by one the 'sun-myths' of fifty years ago are being proved to have been living men, as Madame Blavatsky declared they were; but in a recent article by Herbert J. Spinden, of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, the Mexican 'god,' Quetzalcoatl, whose Mayan name was Kukulcan, is definitely added to the list. Native historians, for referring to him as a real man, who became a god after death, can no longer be treated with condescending pity.

"Instead of being an allegory of the seasons, Quetzalcoatl, which means 'Plumed Serpent' (an Adept), is now said to have reigned over Mexico for twenty-two years, with the year 1191 A.D. as about the half-way period of his reign. He was not only a great warrior, a wise administrator, an astronomer and mathematician, leader in the revival of the ancient Mayan learning, but was so devout that the Spanish priests who followed Cortes insisted that he must have been a Christian. He was bearded and wore a long priestly robe; he built houses of penance and spent long hours in meditation and prayer; he used incense, and would not permit human sacrifices: such things could be explained only on the ground that he was a Christian, or, if not, on the theory that the devil had inspired him to anticipate Christian practice in order to confuse men's minds in the future!"

"I wish we were in Switzerland, preferably at Vevey," suddenly exclaimed the Student. "New York is becoming worse and worse as a place to live in."

"What has that to do with Quetzalcoatl? And why don't you count your

blessings? It might be easier to live in Vevey, but it will certainly be still easier to die in New York."

The Student enjoyed that, particularly as he recognized its Gallic origin. "My remark," he said, "had no least connection with Quetzalcoatl, but I introduced it deliberately because, as a rule, the conversations reported in the 'Screen' are inhumanly consecutive and coherent. People never stick to one subject when conversing; and I'm determined to show the Recorder how to do it. For instance, in an ordinary conversation, I might have thrown out a remark like that about Vevey, and no one would have paid the slightest attention, unless to seize the opportunity, while I breathed, to interject a dissertation on some subject that concerned themselves. In the 'Screen,' the Recorder rarely if ever shows that anyone is interrupted, but my own impression is that I have never in my life been allowed to finish a remark without interruption."

This was too much, and a prolonged Oh! from the rest of us ought to have shamed him. Instead, he continued briskly:

"Which reminds me: have you read *With Lawrence in Arabia*, by Lowell Thomas? It is a war book, badly written, with much repetition, but entertaining reading for hot weather, and it shows that Lawrence, a man of action and of very remarkable action, is a thinker whose philosophy of life—and whose humour—would have made him feel at home at our Convention. The author quotes him as saying:

"'There is no reason to expect from the Arabian movement any new development of law or economics. But Feisal has succeeded in restating forcibly the vital doctrine of the Semites, Other Worldliness; and his ideals will have a profound effect on the growing nationalist movements in Syria, Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Palestine, which are the present homes of Semitic political life.

"'It is like watching the waves of the Atlantic coming in and breaking themselves against the cliffs of the west coast of Ireland. To look at them you would say the cliffs were made of iron, and the waves quite futile. But when you study a map you see that the whole coast is torn open by the wearing of the sea, and you realize that it is only a matter of time before there will cease to be an Irish question. In the same way the successive Semitic protests against the material world may seem simply so much waste effort, but some day the Semitic conviction of the other world may roll unchecked over the place where this world has been.

"'I rank Feisal's movement as one more protest against the utter uselessness of material things. I was only trying to help roll up the wave, which came to its crest and toppled over when we took Damascus. It was just rolling up the Arabs in a tremendous effort and joining the whole nation together in pursuit of an ideal object that had no practical shape or value. We were expressing our entire contempt for the material pursuits exalted by others, from money-making to making statues.'

"On another occasion, in the desert, Lawrence remarked to the author:

"'When you can understand the point of view of another race, you are a civilized being. I think that England (out of sheer conceit, and not because of any inherent virtue in my countrymen) has been less guilty in its contacts than other nations. We do not wish other people to be like us, or to conform to our customs, because we regard imitation of ourselves as blasphemous.'"

"That last touch is delightful," said the Englishman. "I must say for those of my countrymen who are civilized, that they have a genius for laughing at themselves. When an American criticizes America, he is inclined to be savage; and when a Frenchman criticizes France, he is distracted,—in that case, because of the intensity of his love."

"Speaking of England reminds me that we have two questions from there which ought to be answered. The first, about the nature and purposes of God, would need a rather long answer. I am afraid we shall have to postpone it until our next meeting. The second reads as follows:

"'The modern leaders in Theosophical thought appear to regard the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist as very erroneous, yet they hail as truly enlightened souls the great mediæval saints who accepted that doctrine. Can it be that these saints, many of whom seem to have been directly taught by their Divine Master, were suffered to remain deplorably mistaken about transubstantiation? Who can decide when Adepts disagree?'

"Will the Philosopher volunteer?"

"It is one thing to volunteer a reply, and quite another thing to satisfy the questioner!" the Philosopher answered. "I shall not attempt to do that, however, because a complete answer would involve the teaching of the Mysteries. Transubstantiation is the work of Adepts, impossible to perform until Kama has been wholly *retrieved* by Buddhi. Just as the doctrine of Reincarnation has been perverted and materialized in many parts of the world, where it now survives only as a belief in Transmigration (a travesty), so the ancient occult doctrine of transubstantiation has been perverted and materialized until it survives only in the belief (a travesty) that bread and wine can be transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ.

"That the great mediæval saints were not told by their Master, in so many words, that the doctrine of the Eucharist was a travesty of the truth, should not surprise anyone who has studied that Master's methods. Saint Vincent Ferrier, from 1399 to the time of his death, announced far and wide that the end of the world was at hand. He believed it with all his mind and heart, and thus turned thousands from anarchy and licentiousness to lives of decency and order. No ordinary appeal, in that age, would have had any effect. Yet Ferrier was mistaken in his belief: the end of the world was not at hand. If it was the duty of their Master to enlighten his saints on the subject of the Eucharist, why was it not his duty to enlighten Ferrier—a real saint—about his particular misconception? Or take, as further example, the Transfiguration as reported by Matthew in the seventeenth chapter of his Gospel: Peter

took it for granted that the two men who appeared with Jesus were Moses and Elias—the two most famous Israelites. A nice mess there would have been if Jesus had told him he was mistaken, and that the two men were Master——— and Master———! He would have created hopeless confusion in Peter's mind, needlessly; yet, for the sake of future generations (knowing, doubtless, that his words would mean nothing to those who then heard them), he went on to say that Elias had already come in the person of John the Baptist, implying, as clearly as possible, that Elias had *not* been one of the two strange men they had seen.

"It is easy enough, as I see it, to understand that situation; why should it be any more difficult to understand the same Master's reticence when it came to the fixed ideas and mental limitations of his later followers? Common sense should help us solve that phase of the problem. It is safe to assume, surely, that there are degrees of enlightenment. In the second place, it is safe to assume that just as in the intellectual world, one man may be a great mathematician, and another, a great chemist knowing very little about mathematics, so in the spiritual world one man may be more highly developed in one direction than in another. No student of Theosophy is likely to maintain that a St. Teresa or a St. Catherine of Siena, in her personal consciousness, possessed anything approaching the understanding of a chêla even of low degree, such as Damodar, thirty years ago. They may have known as much of their Master's *heart* as he knew of his, but he certainly knew more of his Master's *mind*. Their limitation may have been a sacrifice made prior to incarnation to enable them to work in a difficult and narrow environment. If they had known more, their usefulness might have been seriously impaired. Apart from that, however, to have told them that their Church and priests were mistaken in their doctrine of the Eucharist would have been just as bewildering to them, as it would have been to have told Peter the facts about the two strange men of the Transfiguration. Even as it was, Peter's bewilderment may be guessed from Luke's phrase,—that he knew not what he said. Who can wonder, or blame him! And what could Peter have accomplished in later years if his mind had been full of what we now call Theosophy—if, for instance, he had known of other Masters—while unable to say a word of it to his followers, seeing that the time for it had not come!

"It is impossible to read the lives of the saints without being impressed by two facts: first, that they were fearless in telling the truth as they saw it, and second, that if they had seen an inch further, they would have been rejected entirely by their Church, and the whole object of their work would have been defeated. Think what would have happened to St. Teresa had she tried to tell her confessor that the Lord had shown her the error of 'transubstantiation'! The truth is that most of them were persecuted by their ecclesiastical superiors, even as it was, for views or actions supposed to have been heterodox.

"That, in any case, would be my answer, though I am afraid the questioner may not find it to his liking."

"Whether he likes your answer or not, I like his question," said the Ancient.

"It reminds me of the age of faith, when the problems of religion tore men's souls. Compare it, as a question, with those which harass the average man: how can he 'score a point' over his associates, and thus climb another step up the ladder of his ambition—social, professional or what not—without exposing himself to the shafts of criticism? How can he 'collect' from his customers without losing their patronage? How can he, on his small income, keep up appearances in the eyes of his neighbours? How can he conceal such and such a blunder from his employer? The desire for truth for truth's own sake, not from curiosity but as a fierce craving of the soul, as a passionate desire for the light, is rare in this age. It has been compared with the desire of a scientist for 'facts'; but the desire for so-called facts is totally different from the desire for understanding, and there are not many scientists to-day of the calibre of Darwin or Huxley who, while respecting facts, used them merely as aids to the understanding of universal problems. Few things, in my opinion, are more important on the path of discipleship than a genuine and disinterested determination to know the truth about everything which might affect our action or our judgments, and a readiness to pay the price, in time, energy and thought, which always must be paid before the truth can be found and assimilated. We should cultivate a reverence for the truth, in little things as in big. It is a characteristic of the Masters. Scrupulosity and carelessness are opposite poles of the same vice. Intellectual integrity—an open mind, an eager intellect, an honest heart—is a spiritual power, without which we must continue to wander, far from them, 'in the region of unlikeness.'"

T.

An obedience worthy of the name, demands always a more scrupulous observance than those demand who give us orders.—M. SÉMER.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

November 14th, 1915.

DEAR ———

You are doing well—so well that it would probably puzzle you if I told you how well. There are plenty of mistakes; plenty of misunderstandings, of yourself and of others; plenty of misconceptions; much self-distrust; and occasionally some discouragement: but in spite of all this, you have done and are doing very well. And that makes me very glad. I think I told you once that you were one of my comforts; and I have been feeling recently as if I hadn't many;—which shows how bad I have been.

Do not minimize the importance of little things. Your physical penances, as to diet, etc., are not unimportant, trivial; on the contrary, Heaven itself is gained by just such things. Learn, however, to raise these little practices up a plane: you do not need much purely physical discipline (we all need some), but you do need mental and moral discipline, and do not yet know how to control your thinking sufficiently to get real results from mental discipline. Try it. Instead of giving up butter, give up some form of thinking. You are already doing it, but perhaps not quite so consciously, or from this point of view.

Do try to open out more to others. I do not mean a more cordial manner, I mean a more cordial feeling. Others need it, and you need it. Let the feeling come first: otherwise you offend, for everyone pierces through a cordial manner, and discovers the lack of feeling, if there be a lack.

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

November 26th, 1915.

DEAR ———

In reply to your letter of November 21st, I am directed to say that, even if there were a small element of self-pity mixed with the motives which caused your emotion, that element is of no importance in comparison with the importance of your besetting sin, which is, as you know, lack of self-confidence, lack of trust in your own instincts and good sense.

With kind regards,
I am, faithfully,
C. A. GRISCOM.

November 27th, 1915.

DEAR ———

You have my warmest sympathy; I am sincerely sorry that you should suffer so much. But it is only right that you should try to see the fact, namely, that what you call your "personal feeling" is purely and inexcusably selfish.

You have been told this more than once already, but I repeat it. You will never win what you want to win from ———— until you have completely surrendered that loved one to the Master. And although this may sound terrifying, all it means, actually, is that your love should cease to be selfish. At present it is a sort of idolatry, and, against that, God and all of life and nature, are jealous. In other words, you, by your idolatry, erect an insuperable barrier between yourself and your object.

Remember that the Master seeks our happiness, and that he knows what we desire. He wants to give it to us, but only in the purified form that will make it permanent and us really happy. . . .

What you need to do is not to surrender your love for ————, but to surrender ————'s love for you. Think this over carefully, for it tells the whole story of where you go wrong.

With best wishes,
I am, sincerely,
C. A. Griscom.

Christmas Day, 1915.

Dear ———

You have written me such a sweet letter that I do not want the day to pass without thanking you. But you, yourself, are your best gift to anyone who loves you. I have already told you that you have made me happy by your steady progress and improvement. I should be ungrateful indeed if I did not continually rejoice as I see you grow.

I hope the New Year will see a steady walk forward towards the realization of all your heart's desires. I am sure it will, for that is what you want, and that is what the Master wants.

I return the last two records. You are getting, one way or another, answers to all your questions, and quite as much as you can use, in the way of advice and direction.

So I shall end, as I began, with thanks for your note, and an expression of my warmest hopes for your coming year.

Sincerely yours,
C. A. Griscom.

February 1st, 1916.

Dear ———

I return the letters you sent me.

I do not think you could have heard one thing that ———— said last night;—to this effect:

We all have things in our own past, in this life or in some other, that make it very difficult for us to be severe with the sins and delinquencies of others, and to deal with them adequately. He said that to suppress such feelings was one of the sacrifices we must make.

That is half your point.

The other half is that there is no *need* for me—for us—to know more than we do, to know particulars; they do not matter. The past is past. A disciple's past, especially, is as if it had not been. It is resurrected, if at all, only for its lessons, and for the use that can be made of it, as an experience, to help others.

You are not looking at it from this point of view.

On the other hand, if the thing is a sore spot that needs ventilation or drainage, and you want to have it out, why go ahead. I am sure that ——— would be willing to listen.

With kind regards,
I am, sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

February 14th, 1916.

DEAR ———

I have read this with interest and appreciation. You are doing well. Incidentally, this is an admirable example of what such a report ought to be.

I am sorry we could not make a more accurate diagnosis of the pain to which you refer. In our talk, which was interrupted, I suggested to you several possible causes. In thinking it over, I am pretty sure it is only the pressure your own soul is putting on you at this time of crisis.

With kind regards,
I am, sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

February 16th, 1916.

DEAR ———

There are half a dozen ways of answering the question on the third page of your last record—about keeping one's eyes down. What is its purpose? Obviously to prevent the religious from having her attention distracted from inner, by outer things; to assist recollection; to give outer expression to humility. Which of these phases of the same practice do you want the opposite of, or the higher expression of? Select the phase, think a moment, and you can answer your own questioning.

With kind regards,
I am, sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

March 10, 1916.

DEAR ———

You are incorrigible! For years, and especially during these recent months, we have urged and scolded and pleaded with you to stop these self-depreciatory

thoughts; and now you bob up serenely with the worst one of all; for this particular attitude toward Church Festivals and Easter not only argues lack of faith in yourself, but lack of faith in the Master. If you were not so good I should say you were very bad! As it is, I shall relieve my feelings by saying that you are very silly.

Forget it, and have some plain, ordinary, everyday common sense. You do not have to be perfect to be tenderly loved by the Master, or by your fellows; therefore accept your limitations and failings, vigorously attacking those you know of, particularly this one, and go on cheerfully, determined to conquer them and yourself, and especially to eschew all morbid, depressing, discouraging and self-depreciating thoughts.

You should read *Sœur Thérèse de Lisieux*, again and again. If you could really feel as little and as insignificant as she did, and could learn to rejoice in your nothingness, your heart would scarcely be able to contain your joy.

Sincerely,
C. A. Griscom.

March 20th, 1916.

Dear ———

I return your record, with comments on your questions. I have not attempted to deal with your other inquiries, partly because they were more comments than real questions, and partly because you must learn to decide most points for yourself. If your desire, your motive is all right, as I think it is, usually,—it does not very much matter what particular action you take in many of these cases.

By all means, keep at your besetting sin. You will find it cropping out in strange places, as for instance, in asking questions about things you can decide perfectly for yourself. That does *not* mean that you are not to ask questions. I am glad to have you ask questions.

With best wishes,
As always,
C. A. Griscom.

October 10th, 1916.

Dear ———

In comment upon your report for the period ending September 30th, I am directed to write you as follows:—

The object of formal prayer is to open the heart; therefore if in the midst of some formal prayer, the heart involuntarily turns, with some special comment or need quite its own, to the Master, that impulse should be obeyed, and then the prayer resumed.

The need of regular formal prayer becomes plain to us in periods of dryness, when the fountains of the heart cease flowing, and we realize the dust of which

mind and body are made. Then the habit of formal prayer is our refuge and our safety; and in time, by its help, the fountains flow again,—will and determination, combined with faithfulness, clearing away the debris which checked the streams of living water.

With kind regards,
I am, sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

November 6th, 1916.

DEAR ———

In your last report you bitterly lament that having been directed to speak frankly to one of your fellows, for the good of that fellow student, you could not carry out the assignment because you had nothing to say.

You are literally seething with things in your mind about that student: criticisms, if you like, for most of them are critical; and then you calmly announce that your trouble is not in saying things, but in having nothing to say!

You do not seem to make the connection;—you hunt around for some kind of thing which you imagine you ought to be thinking and that would sound well if spoken, and you ignore the criticisms you have been full of, and have been aching to express to anyone who would listen to you.

Get them out. Some of them you will be ashamed of when they get into the light; others will be of help. In either event, good will be done.

As always,
C. A. GRISCOM.

P. S. You are doing very well and do not need "talks."

November 23rd, 1916.

DEAR ———

By all means speak to the friend you mention, about ridding your mind of criticism of ————, and anyone or everyone else. Show him my letter if you like.

I return some recent and very nice records. I am glad to be privileged to see them. You are doing well. Go ahead.

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

December 20th, 1916.

DEAR ———

I have read your recent report with interest. Point No. 1—that you are not doing your job at ———— properly. This is just "mental stewing."

We do not, any of us, do anything perfectly, but subject to this general limitation you are doing splendidly, and we are proud of you.

Point No. 2—about the position you hold. This *is* half a joke. I never knew one in that position who felt competent for the job. What kind of a one would you make if you did think yourself ideal? There is a good deal of "mental stewing" about this also.

3rd Point—being —— and wearing a habit. You say you "cannot get the feeling of it." That is the point: before positive outward steps are taken, you must have the feeling, in and of yourself, quite independently of any other person whatsoever. The *desire* to feel you have, undoubtedly, (the "wishing to be willing"), but you must have the feeling itself, want things for themselves.

Lack of imagination is one of your great barriers. I think ———— told you that long ago; I know I have. Did not ———— suggest that you read poetry and fairy tales? Imagination is the creative faculty.

You are really a "good child" doing very well, and must not be discouraged because you are not perfect in all particulars! We are not. (Not discouraged, I mean!)

With kind regards,

As always,

C. A. Griscom.

January 3rd, 1917.

Dear ———

Have you any objections to my showing your last record to ————? I am confident that it would interest her, and I am hopeful that she might be willing to talk to you about some of the misunderstandings which the record shows. You are fighting windmills, and that is a pity.

Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom.

February 19th, 1917.

Dear ———

I have no objections to your doing any or all of your list of penances. I have no suggestions of my own to offer. As a general rule it is wise to select penances that will lead the way to good permanent habits, not just things to do during Lent.

Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom.

January 17th, 1917.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * * *

The Master is fighting the evil in the world; sometimes as personified in actual representatives of the Black Lodge, sometimes the general mass of evil in the human atmosphere; sometimes concrete evil in individuals, as their faults and weaknesses allow the other two to work through them.

We are the instruments he uses in this fight,—among others. Every human being who tries at all to be good is one of his weapons. When we actually and consciously volunteer for the fight, of course he uses us still more definitely and directly, even though he knows that we really do not understand what we are doing, and even though he knows that he will have to put up with our complaints that the service is too hard, and that we are called upon to suffer more than we can bear. So far as I know, *everyone* does this; but we never are called upon to suffer more than we can bear, or to do more difficult things than we can.

Again;—the marvellous wisdom of the Master is shown constantly by his use of available instruments in that part of the battlefield where they will get the kind of experience, the character of service which they need for their own development: therefore we know that we are not only fighting his enemies, but we are also fighting our own lower nature; and that keeps us humble, keeps us from ever really taking refuge behind the thought that we are called upon to fight an uneven fight, asked to do too much, given too hard tasks,—no matter how much our minds may occasionally play with such thoughts. Of course we ought not to permit such thoughts, and "*thinking* as if," or "accordingly," is our safety here.

Still another thing: your real self is perpetually leaning on the Master; you know no other life than one based on this, and are so used to it that you do not recognize the fact. What you want is that your lower self, your weak side, should feel his supporting arms. Well, it never will, because that is not the part of you he sustains.

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

March 5th, 1917.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * * *

I am glad to see that in the more important matters you are doing so well and being so sensible. We shall have that curious, twisted nature of yours untangled yet, if you are not careful!

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, April 25th, 1925, at 64 Washington Mews, New York, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston. Temporary organization was effected by the election of Mr. Johnston as Temporary Chairman of the Convention, Miss Isabel E. Perkins as Temporary Secretary, and Miss Julia Chickering as Assistant Secretary. The first business of the Convention being to determine what Branches of the Society were duly represented, either by delegates or proxies,—it was moved and seconded that the Chair appoint a Committee on Credentials, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss Perkins, Secretary T. S.; Miss Martha E. Youngs, Assistant Treasurer.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

MR. JOHNSTON: While the Committee on Credentials is performing its duties, it is the privilege and the very genuine happiness of the Temporary Chairman to bid all delegates and members welcome. In fact we all welcome each other, with warm hearts and with rejoicing. A year ago, and two years ago, much was said about the fact that The Theosophical Society is completing its fiftieth year. The fiftieth year will really be completed—the Society will reach its fiftieth anniversary—on November 17th of this year. Nevertheless, I think it is not too soon to congratulate the Society on its fiftieth birthday, and to wish it very many happy returns of the day,—not less, at any rate, than fifty happy returns, which will bring us to 1975. This is an attainment upon which not only we, as members of The Theosophical Society, but the whole world, are to be most sincerely congratulated,—a spiritual attainment of immense significance for the present and for the future; something which has never been accomplished before in all past centuries of our civilization. Therefore there is the deep joy of attainment,—which should remind us that we have not yet reached the goal. We are half way round the course. There are still fifty years to run, and we should be wise to remember that, if we have won the war, we must take good care to win the peace also, and to secure every step of the way.

I was reading, just before coming here, the last pages of *The Key to Theosophy*, in which Madame Blavatsky speaks of the future of The Theosophical Society. Splendid pages! Splendid hopes! Splendid foreseeing of the future! I think every one of us would do well to study these last pages thoroughly, between now and the 17th of November, and to visualize clearly the way that is before us and the splendour of the goal. The last words of Madame Blavatsky's forecast are that if The Theosophical Society really fulfils its duty and its mission,—in the twenty-first century this earth will be a heaven compared with what it is now. Our

best preparation, therefore, is to make this a great Convention,—great in devotion, great in determination, great in unity, great in aspiration, and great, perhaps most of all, in gratitude for the help which is ceaselessly given us by the real Heads and Founders of the Theosophical Movement. Every one here, and every other member, shall and must contribute,—not so much with the words of our lips as with the meditations of our hearts—our earnestness, our selflessness, our devotion—everyone must contribute to make this the greatest Convention The Theosophical Society has ever had. Welcome, therefore. All joy for the future.

Report of the Committee on Credentials

Professor Mitchell: On behalf of the Committee on Credentials, I beg to report that there are represented here to-day nineteen branches from six different countries, entitled to cast an even hundred votes. The Branches thus represented are:

Altagracia, Altagracia de Orituco, Venezuela
Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia
Blavatsky, Whitley Bay, England
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana
Jehoshua, San Fernando de Apure, Venezuela
W. Q. Judge, Gateshead, England
Karma, Oslo, Norway
Krishna, South Shields, England
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
New York, New York, N. Y.
Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Virya, Denver, Colorado

It was moved, seconded and voted that the Report of the Committee on Credentials be accepted, and that the Committee be discharged with thanks.

The status of the Convention and the representation of the various Branches having been determined, the next business was the permanent organization of the Convention. Professor Mitchell, President of the New York Branch, was nominated and duly elected as Permanent Chairman of the Convention, and took the Chair.

Address of the Permanent Chairman

The Chairman: One fact stands forth above all others in our thought and hearts to-day—the fact that The Theosophical Society has lived for fifty years,—that for a full quarter of a century the Lodge force has had an entrance into the world in a cyclic phase which has been impervious to it throughout all the past. It is something wholly new in the history of mankind. What has been the result? How are we to interpret the present time? What must be our aim and work for the future? These are the vital questions which we should consider to-day.

It would be hard to find in history another twenty-five years in which so rapid and profound a change has been wrought as that which we have seen since the opening of the present century. Look where we will—to science or religion, to literature or art, to the home or to business, to personal manners or public policies, to internal government or to international relations,—in all, the old order has passed away, all are in process of transformation, feeling a new stimulus, responsive to new forces.

It is not the world war which precipitated these forces. They were operative and in evidence for fourteen years before the war broke out. The war was an effect and not a cause. The cause itself was the entrance into the world of the new currents of the Lodge force. It is as though one poured a mountain stream into a stagnant pond. Everything would be changed. The mud, the rotting weeds, the decomposing refuse of the years, would be cast up from the bottom, would boil and eddy on the surface, as the water rose to find an outlet, and ulti-

mately would be cast forth upon the banks,—no longer to pollute the water, but to fertilize the earth in their decay.

It has been said that in a garden and in the nursery every principle of the inner life is illustrated and every occult truth revealed. Let me then use an illustration which was used to me, and which I found illuminating, interpreting the world about us by means of the age-old parable of the gardener and his garden, the "husbandman" and his "vineyard," thinking of the world as a fallow field, newly opened to the gardener, to be tended and made fruitful. Let us remember, too, that "a year of the gods is equal to a hundred years of mortals," so that, in this "year of the gods" we have now reached the vernal equinox, the very early spring, and the twenty-five years from the beginning of the century represent the months from the winter solstice. What is it that a garden shows us then?

It is the time for the enriching of the soil. Over all the surface, fertilizer is spread—manure, bone-meal and lime, compost with dead leaves, the decaying waste from a former growth which has bloomed and died. It is not a lovely sight. It is foul to every sense. But under the spring sun and rains it decomposes, and as the frost comes out of the ground, leaving the earth soft and permeable, fertilizing elements are drawn down, and worked upon by the earth's secret, purifying alchemy, until they are transformed into rich food for the growth that is to be.

We have, in that, a picture of our present time. We shall do well to dwell upon it. All about us, the new life currents from the Lodge have stirred our civilization to its dregs, casting up and spreading on the surface the decaying, decomposing products of the past, whose use and destiny is but to enrich the soil for future generations. They lie there for their brief allotted time, while sun and rain work their work upon them, until the gardener comes and ploughs them under.

Let us recall what we know of the great law of cycles, and that the early spring marks the movement of the life forces into matter, unlocking the hidden energies of nature, so that each sleeping seed and root awakes and presses up and outward to manifest itself according to its kind. Whatsoever thing the Lodge force touches, it quickens and intensifies. (When it kills —as kill it may and does—it kills by excess of life, quickening evil till it destroys itself.) Touching and mingling with this springtime current, the force of the Lodge intensifies it a thousand times. Never before in the history of the world has man been set so free to manifest the thing he is.

We have spoken often in these Conventions of the work of The Theosophical Society in breaking down the hard encasements that confined the religious and scientific thought of the past century. To-day the shells are shattered and cast aside. The aspirations of the mind and of the heart, for their own truths in science and religion, have been alike set free. We are right to see in this an evidence of the success of the Theosophical Movement, but we are of strangely narrow vision and dull of understanding if we see no more than this. We cannot claim the credit and disown the debt. Not only good but evil has been freed from external restraint,—the ambitions and envies, the desires and hates, the sloth and vulgarities of the dregs of the lower nature, no less than the aspirations of the higher. Never before has the compulsion of external nature and of circumstance pressed so lightly upon men. Never before has there been such widespread wealth, such leisure, such possibility for self-indulgence of whatever kind. Whatsoever thing is in a man's heart and nature, that thing he can act out in the world to-day, less hindered by external obstacles—whether of tradition or public opinion, poverty or the pressure of the necessities of life—than in any past age which history records. This, too, is fundamentally due to the Theosophical Movement,—to the fact that it was carried over the end of the century, and has worked for these twenty-five years in a cycle it never entered before. The gardener has manured his field.

As in ancient Egypt the fertility of the soil was due to the seasonal overflowing of the Nile, and the depositing of its silt upon the fields along its banks, so in the world to-day there is the overflowing of the greater Nile—of which the river is perhaps but a symbol.

Can we see, a little more clearly now, where and how we stand, and what the effects of the work have so far been? It has been said that the only right of the disciple is the right to be

tried—to be aided to reveal what he is, and to become what he wills to become. Every divine power is of necessity a divine judge. Every opportunity judges us according to the use we make of it. So it is that the unparalleled opportunities that are now open to men make of to-day a crucial day of judgment. There is none to stop us if we choose to cast our lot with the world—to surrender to the vulgarity, the cheapness, the self-indulgence, that we see all about us, to find our pleasure in its pleasures, to bask with it on the surface of life's fields, in the spring sunshine. We may do so if that be what we are, or wish to be. But let us face the facts with open eyes: if that be our choice, we shall be judged by it; we shall live but to manure the ground for what comes after us. We shall have our brief day in which to rot with the decaying waste from the past, and then—we shall be ploughed under, to serve the one use for which we are fit, to enrich the soil for something sound and vital.

At this time, more than at any other period of the cycle, therefore, the opposition between the inner and the outer world is most sharply drawn and direct. In the very early spring, it is not life that is found upon the surface, but death and decay—the waste that must be resolved again into its elements.

Therefore, if we are to draw from the garden an understanding of the spiritual principles which apply to our present need, the lesson it teaches is that, if we would live and not die, if we would continue to exist in the future, as part of the new growth that the gardener plants and tends, we must keep ourselves aloof from what lies about us in the world. Our work, our thought, our hope and interest, must centre in the inner world—not in the outer. We must live from the depths of our hearts and souls, where, as in the buried seed, we should feel the spring stirring. It is there that we must find our ideals and standards; and it is from there that we must live them forth.

I am concerned to make this lesson as sharp and clear as I am able to draw it. I would emphasize in every way our need to set our faces like flint against the present tendencies of the world—so that, if "everyone is doing it," our first and instinctive reaction shall be, "then I must not do it." I would drive home the necessity of imposing restraint upon ourselves, now that the world's restraints are lifted. There is no power without restraint, no form, no stability, no lasting life,—without it there is only disintegration. Therefore let me approach this need from another point of view and make, if I may, another appeal.

There can be none here to-day, I think, who is not conscious of a deep and lasting debt for what Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement have done for and given to him. We have been told that the Lodge was by no means a unit in its decision to make the popular appeal which was initiated in the last century, opening Theosophy to the multitude, breaking down barriers for the wise and the foolish alike. When we look back over the past twenty-five years, as we have just done, we can easily see why there should have been divergence of opinion—though once the decision was reached there was complete unity of action. Every use of spiritual power must be a two-edged sword; cleaving a way forward if it be driven forward, but wounding him who wields it if it be driven back. It must be so—and we can see how clearly it is so—with our Movement. Its success brings war, a challenging summons to evil, as well as the evocation of the good,—war of which the world war was but a shadow. That war is here and now,—in the inner world of causes, in your heart and nature and in mine, and in the heart and nature of the whole of our civilization and the world. The Masters foresaw that war. They knew it must be precipitated when the Movement was carried into the new cycle.

"What king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?"

Do we realize that it is on us—on our ability to hold firm—that the issue of that war depends? Do we realize that if we fail, if we surrender to the world, then the very success of these past twenty-five years will be turned back like a sword against the Lodge?

Sometimes we counsel one another to have faith—faith in the great Lodge of Masters—and, to our shame be it said, there are dark times when in our pitiable cowardice we have needed that counsel. Do we think of the heroic faith the Lodge has placed in us—staking the

issue of this war on us—letting licence rise so that the human spirit may be freed, if only we stand firm? How are we to meet that faith?

But I have said enough of this. It is not by words that we shall be moved to the resolution that we need. Our resolve must be founded on clear vision of the facts. Let us come back then to our simile of the garden in the springtime, and let us use it now to look forward to what must lie ahead, remembering that the parallel applies not only to the world at large but to our own natures as well—to each individual heart and life.

The fertilizer will have been ploughed under; the soil enriched. In that rich soil there must be growth. It is impossible to keep it empty. If there be not good seed sown, then the seed of weeds left in the manure, or carried by the winds, will sprout and fill it.

We can take it that the seed has been sown in us. We know that Theosophy has been implanted deep within us. The gardener has cared for that. It will grow if we will let it; if we will keep the beds weeded, cultivated, watered. And this must be our work in the years ahead—for our own natures and for the world as a whole. If one bed be left full of weeds, the winds will spread their seed throughout the whole garden. We cannot live to ourselves—nor die to ourselves. We must be part of the whole, part of the living nucleus which The Theosophical Society is to form.

We shall understand the future if we really understand the present. I come back to that as our great and pressing need—that we should learn to see the present with the eyes of the Lodge—with the eyes of the gardener looking on his garden, working with nature, not against it, using decay to foster growth, fertilizing, ploughing, planting, tending and reaping, each in its season. There are those to whom the world appeals—perhaps there is something in each one of us to which it appeals, if we permit ourselves to listen to it. We must not permit ourselves to listen. There are those to whom it does not appeal, who see its vulgarity and cheapness and decadence, and yet, through sloth or cowardice, would yield to it, accept it as it is, conform to it as the "easiest way." It is the way of death. That which is uppermost in the world to-day is that which we must plough under in our natures. It must be disintegrated, transformed and purified in its disintegration.

There is yet a third class, who resent the present, with bitterness and a kind of snarling peevishness that comes from their sense of impotence to alter it. They are as unwise as are the others, and as blind. The garden must be fertilized—this foulness must be spread upon the surface that it may be decomposed and return again to the soil. It is this for which it is alone useful; and for this it is being used. When this is realized, futile peevishness will fall away, and in its place will rise an understanding, patient, and unswerving will to make our own lives fit to serve another end than merely to manure the ground in our decay. We take our place beside the gardener, and, watching him, learn how to live.

This, I submit, is the lesson of the present time. There are but two ways by which living things do live. We find each in our gardens. The one way is the way of the annual. It shoots up from the seed, has its brief time of bloom and seed-bearing, then drops its seed and dies. Its stalk, its leaves, its roots, all that it has been, decay and return again to their elements—all but the seed, which waits the coming of the new season, when it may begin again from the same beginning, to repeat the cycle as before. There is no gain—no increment added, save the increment of numbers—nothing but the return to the soil in its decay of that which it drew from the soil in life. We may live in this way if we will. But there is another way—the way not of the annual but of the perennial—where the roots keep their hold through the winter, where tender stalks harden into wood, and hold themselves up above the earth, not stooping to the dead and rotting things that lie around their feet. In this way each year's growth is added to the last, begins where the last left off. This way, too, is open to us. It is for each man to choose.

Following this address, the Chairman expressed, on behalf of the Convention, hearty thanks to the Temporary officers, and asked that the permanent organization be completed. Miss Perkins was duly elected Permanent Secretary of the Convention, and Miss Chickering Assistant Secretary. It was then moved, seconded and carried that the Chair

appoint the usual committees: a Committee on Nominations; a Committee on Resolutions; a Committee on Letters of Greeting. Reports from the officers of the Society were thereupon called for, beginning with that of the Executive Committee, for which, as its chairman, Mr. Johnston was first asked to speak.

Report of the Executive Committee

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Chairman, Delegates, and Fellow Members: The report of the Executive Committee will be brief. There have been no stirring outer events in the Society,—in that direction there is nothing to report—for which we are duly grateful. But the occasion is an opportune one to say something about the Executive Committee itself,—the principle on which it is organized. A good many years ago—perhaps twenty years ago—the Executive Committee was appointed from year to year. Technically, it went out of office on the morning of the Convention, and a new Committee was elected some time during the afternoon, so that for several hours there was no Executive Committee in being. I had thought of various ways of illustrating the non-continuity which that implies. The Chairman has given us an illustration—the Executive Committee was an annual flower, with all the perils which that involves. In reality, it meant a lack of continuity in the organism of the Society. The spinal vertebræ went out of commission on the morning of the Convention, and were only re-developed on the evening of the Convention. And it seemed to members at that time that this was an insecure situation, and one wrong in principle, since continuity is so vital to the life of the Society,—and all that that means has been very forcibly and penetratingly put before us in the last hour. Therefore the plan was devised of having two-thirds of the Executive Committee always in office—one-third coming up for election each year and two-thirds remaining in office. That principle of continuity is a vital element, therefore, and should serve to make us realize how important continuity is for the Society and for our whole Movement. The responsibility of continued organic life is not confined to the Executive Committee. It rests on every member of The Theosophical Society, and every member should take it to heart that he or she really has a plenary reponsibility for the future life. as for the present vitality, of the Theosophical Movement. It depends on every member whether we shall reach 1975 in the right condition. No member can escape the responsibility. We must know our past, we must know our eternal principles in order that we may know and attain our eternal future. So that the principle of the Executive Committee on which I wish to report and which I wish to emphasise to every member here, is the principle of continuity. It is for all members, for each one of us—we are all fully responsible—to hold the Movement in the line to which it must hold, if we are to attain our goal.

Mr. Hargrove: This is an occasion, I think, on which the Executive Committee should perform an especial function. It represents the Convention between Conventions, and although it would be difficult, and indeed impossible, completely to voice your thought and feeling to-day, one can at least try to do so. I think the first feeling with which you entered this room probably was: Well, here I am—here we are,—and then a feeling of thanksgiving, of inexpressible gratitude that we *are* here; gratitude to those, both seen and unseen, present here to-day, who have dragged us, pushed us, persuaded us, won us, so that here we are; gratitude that it would be impossible to express in words, gratitude which the soul alone can utter. First and foremost, in the nature of things, gratitude to H. P. B., to Judge—because without them there would be no Theosophical Society, and we should have no knowledge of Theosophy. But then, naturally, we think of others—properly we think of others. It would not do to speak of the living, but the truth of the matter as I see it is that The Theosophical Society as such could not have existed to-day if it had not been for the rock-like fidelity of Mr. Griscom. Our debt is immense also to Mrs. Keightley (Jasper Niemand)—yes, and to the long list of the dead, all of whom contributed, to all of whom our thoughts inevitably turn on this the fiftieth anniversary of the Society's foundation.

We see here old members who have borne the burden and heat of the day, and we see quite

young members also. I can assure those younger members that there will be no dispute at the end of the day, when that time comes, over the wages! You will not be grudged your equal pay for briefer years of toil. On the contrary, the older members, if they knew how, would cause you to be doubly rewarded,—so great is their gratitude for your efforts and for your trust. It may be, of course, that your days will be just as long as those of the oldest member among us,—just as long, but I hope not any harder!

I said "Here we are," which was an easy and rather obvious thing to say; but the question is, where are we? And to answer that it will be helpful, perhaps, to use a figure of speech. We may think, then, of the Lodge of Masters as having besieged a walled city, century after century,—a walled city full of enemy forces, and, within it, held captive, the Heart of the World. For ages that city has been besieged, and although we speak of the efforts in past centuries as having failed, let us remember that the Movement in this century could not have succeeded except for those past movements, except for the sacrifices of those who failed. We ascend to-day on the bones of the past. We ascend to-day because of the blood and the sweat poured forth by those who toiled and—failed. Should not this remind us that failure itself may be victory?

Thinking, then, of the age-long movement in those terms, what was the situation in 1875? The Lodge was confronted by an outer wall, never yet surmounted, and, within that, by a series of walls and battlements—let us say four great walls in all; and, in the inmost citadel, captive and bewildered, the Heart of the World. At the end of the first twenty-five year period, we can think of the first of those walls as having been captured, and that now, to-day, having reached the summit of the second great wall, we stand gazing down before us—a moment's pause to recover our breath—the critical moment, "the mother of centuries." Pushed or lifted or pulled to the top of this wall, looking down before us, should we rest content with our achievement? Truly we have scaled a terrific obstacle, every member, the youngest, and the least, a link or a rung in the ladder of our ascent. A victory. Yes! But no quarter is given in this war; we must advance or face destruction as we retreat, hemmed in and no longer free to manœuvre. Beyond us, other walls to be scaled, and dark and noisome streets, blind alleys, ful of hostile troops—full of illusion, full of evil—into which we must plunge once more, and fight.

You would not desert your leaders, leaving them stranded on the height attained—our old leaders, H. P. B. and Judge, the same to-day as yesterday. We cannot desert them. We must follow and continue to follow, and, instead of feeling to-day that the work is done, we must feel,—So far, good! *So far*, thank heaven; and now Forward and prepare for the consequences! Risk? Of course there is risk. That is what we are here for.

A symbol, of course; yet it may help to express the realization of those who are present at this Convention. Not one of you is shouting victory. Every one of you feels the weight of his responsibility; every one of you feels his danger, and every one of you thanks God for it, seeing that danger is also our opportunity. So let us move onward, looking back at the depths behind us, forward to the depths beneath,—but also and for ever looking upward to those who lead and to the Light which leads.

In Professor Mitchell's opening address, he explained to us—profoundly, as you will see when you have an opportunity to read it, basing his explanation upon the deepest truths of Theosophy—he explained to us something of the conditions that we confront, and why it is that the state of the world as we see it around us, the decay manifest in so many different directions, is not only a necessary but potentially a fruitful condition. (And let me remind you at this point that it is Theosophy and Theosophy alone that explains the facts of life, and that shows even in disease the means of cure.) He pointed out that our individual salvation, and that the salvation of The Theosophical Society itself, depends first and foremost upon our ability to recognize decay as decay, immorality as immorality, folly as folly, and then upon our ability to see modern life as an inevitable upheaval and disintegration, or as so much compost in which the life of the spirit should grow. At all costs we must keep ourselves apart from that decay, not only rejecting it in a negative sense—in the sense of refusing to be drawn down into it, and of becoming a part of such rottenness,—but in the positive sense of devoting our

lives to its destruction. You cannot make compost out of live tadpoles. Whether in yourself or in the world, the tadpoles must be killed; and we must kill, in so far as we are able, the glamour of the world's putrescence, the glamour of its seething, morbid vitality, first in our own eyes, and then in the eyes of those who are *willing* to see it for what it is.

Let me illustrate what we mean when speaking of the evils so intensely alive to-day with the life of disintegration. Consider what ought to be the sanctity of the home, the sanctity of marriage,—of marriage based as it is upon a vow, a pledged word, and sacred because of the obligation thus assumed toward the soul, toward society, toward possible offspring. We know how that pledged word is disregarded, and we know the reason,—namely, that happiness is assumed to be the primary purpose of life. And happiness is not the object of life; pleasure is not the object of life: if they were, then of course the light treatment of marriage to-day would be justified, for nothing would be sacred except happiness. Think, however, of the things that we know should come before happiness,—honour, self-respect, decency, a pledged word, and a host of other considerations. Further, there is a crude misunderstanding of love. Love is supposed to be synonymous with happiness, with human, personal happiness; but for thousands of years the Wise have taught (as in the *Nârada Sûtra*), that "Love cannot be made to fulfil desires, for its nature is renunciation." If you were to announce that at the average marriage service, the bride and bridegroom would disintegrate! It is the opposite of the modern view,—and Theosophy does not accept the modern view. Members of the Society cling to that which is real, and not to that which is unreal. They do not believe that it is happiness which ought to be worshipped, but that honour, righteousness, nobility, and, above all, love in the real and deep sense, are things which the Lodge itself reveres. Of course, once the path of chêlaship is entered, such things as marriage are left behind; but this does not mean that the Society leaves them behind or can afford to ignore them, and when marriage is held cheaply and the sanctity of the home ceases to be recognized, it becomes our duty to proclaim that which is true and to protest against that which is false.

Think also of modern education,—of education without religion. Its result can only be to make evil that much more intelligent; self-indulgence, that much more imaginative and acute. Surely we, as members of the Society, should plead for the religious instruction of children; should insist that education must be based upon religion,—not upon sectarian religion, but upon broad religious principles which include reverence for that which is above and beyond the confines of a merely human life.

It would be impossible, however, to list the forms which our modern upheaval takes. Each one of us, perhaps, has his special detestation, and whether in the field of art or of literature or of social practice, there is ample scope for choice! We must realize, of course, that it is just as easy to adopt a wrong attitude toward evil as it is to adopt a right one. To enter into it and to share it—which would mean spiritual death—would be terrible; but it would be almost as bad to fall into a habit of sour and bitter disapproval. Few things are sadder or more tragic than what is commonly called the disillusionment of old age; and yet, as we grow older, we ought to become *rightly* disillusioned. Youth is supposed to be, and often is, the victim of illusions; and sometimes one wishes, really from the depths of one's heart, that one could share one's own experience with youth. It is not easy to do so, for youth is inclined to be confident, and perhaps sceptical, while I suppose there is often an element of curiosity in youth, which says to itself, Even if they *do* know, I want to taste the thing for myself and find out! When that attitude is adopted—when, in other words, there is refusal to learn from the past—I do not know of any remedy except increasing bitterness of experience, pray, as one must, to be able to save youth from it.

But now to come back to age: need it, should it be a blight, either on ourselves or others? Clearly not. Age should become disillusioned delightedly, because every day ought to bring new perceptions, new joys, and new heights and depths of love. Instead of feeling: I am growing old and am leaving the joys of life behind,—there ought to be the gladness of knowing: I am gradually escaping from the world's glamour, and from the misery of the world's unrest. That in any case is the ideal to keep before us,—because some of us are growing older, and there is no escape from it!

Whether old or young, the only way to live profitably—thinking again of Professor Mitchell's most illuminating analogy—is to study the ways of growth. Seed is planted in soil enriched by decomposing vegetable, animal and mineral substances; but it needs more than manure to make growth: it needs sunshine and it needs rain. Without the light of the spiritual sun our hearts would die. The soul lives on hope, and on admiration for that to which it aspires. At the last Convention, Ruskin was quoted as saying: "Exactly in the degree in which you can find creatures greater than yourself, to look up to, in that degree you are ennobled yourself, and, in that degree, happy." True words, because love is Jiva, love is life, and love makes all things new. We must look up if we would grow; we must open our hearts to the spiritual sun. Miserable is the man who can only look down. Just to live we must look up,—must admire, must worship, must long for that which is above and beyond us, and, praise heaven, unattainable (for are there not depths for ever within depths?). If The Theosophical Society were to adopt an attitude of mere criticism, in the destructive sense, it would be suicidal; but it cannot do that, because it stands before the Lodge, gazing into the eyes of Masters, looking up with reverence and love. For that reason it must survive, it must grow, it must push forward and ever forward, drawn irresistibly by worship of the Eternal.

Disapproval must spring from the contrast of hideousness with intended and possible beauty. We must know that the beauty exists; we must see it, with the eyes of faith if not with the eyes of vision; we must love and desire it; and wherever we see evil in the world around us, we must also see that of which the evil is a perversion. To see the real behind the unreal, to see the Eternal in the transitory, to see the soul in the personality, is to live and not to die. It is on these things that we, as students of Theosophy, should meditate, laying our hearts open to the sunlight of the spiritual world, that the life around us, in its turn, may feel the pure knife-blade of the spirit, piercing its darkness and slaying its evil, that that which was sown in corruption may be raised in incorruption, and that death may be swallowed up in victory.

As to the waters: you know that they symbolize the real psychic nature; the best of the emotional nature. These too must be released; yet the main thing is the spiritual sunlight, reaching us from the Lodge.

At the Convention of 1923, much was made of the analogy of the ark,—the "ark of the covenant." In one sense, the Lodge is the ark of the world, preserving for us our birthright. On another plane, The Theosophical Society itself should serve the same purpose, preserving from the raging of the elements, from the flood of psychic illusion, all that is best in life and that has come down to us as the result of millenniums of evolution; preserving the ideals of the Lodge as we have been given them; preserving the ancient truths, preserving right standards, preserving hope. That being the function of The Theosophical Society, it should also be the function of each of its members, however situated, whatever our walk in life may be. No easy task! It may sometimes require great courage, particularly if you are still so young, either in years or in experience, as to be afraid of the opinion of your contemporaries, afraid of being laughed at, afraid, if I may be blunt, of the disapprobation of idiots. It will need courage,—not the courage of egotism, of self-assertion, of self-righteousness, but the courage of simple conviction, able to stand alone, loving what is right so truly and deeply that, in comparison with such love, the opinion of the world becomes a matter of indifference. Take, for instance, the difficulties of a young man at college,—a student of Theosophy. His fellows do certain things which he knows are wrong, and which, if not positively evil, he feels are hostile to the spirit of Theosophy. It does not mean that he is required to preach Theosophy, but, looking to his own soul and remembering the existence of the Masters, he refuses to participate, the rectitude of his own life proclaiming the truths to which he clings. He is indifferent to the opinions of the compost in the midst of which he lives,—and yet, should he need comfort, he may well remind himself that the *real* opinion of his fellows, the opinion of their hidden conscience, is probably the same as his!

I am hoping that one result of this Convention will be to help all of us to a larger measure of such courage. It should be easier for older people, and I am thinking particularly of those who still are young, and who may forget at times that the Masters see them as souls and rev-

erence them as souls. Do not hold yourselves cheaply, young people, friends of ours! We stand together on the crest of the wall of life, looking to the wall beyond, ready to plunge forward, following our leaders, to death if need be, but following. In comparison with that great choice, all other things in life are as empty as hell itself.

So this Convention, I think, while one of rejoicing because of what has been achieved, must first and foremost be one of hope because of what lies ahead,—a battle, and not ease and decay. It is for us to try as we have never tried before; and let us remember, please, that although in one way the success of the Society must depend upon the few, in another way our fate is at the mercy of the weakest link in the chain. We must not provide those unseen leaders of ours, with a rotten rung in the ladder of human lives which constitutes the Society. In union is our strength. We must take hope, take confidence, take faith,—creating faith out of nothing if needs be, so as not to fail the Masters who have trusted us, each one of us, with the performance of his duty, and so with the future of the Society, to the full extent of our powers.

It was moved, seconded and carried, that the Report of the Executive Committee be accepted, with the thanks of the Convention.

THE CHAIRMAN: Prior to calling on the Secretary T. S. for her report, which I know we await with a great deal of interest, the Chair would announce the appointment of the following standing committees:

Committee on Nominations

Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell, *Chairman*
Miss Margaret D. Hohnstedt
Mrs. John W. Regan

Committee on Resolutions

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*
Dr. J. H. Hohnstedt
Mr. G. M. W. Kobbé

Committee on Letters of Greeting

Dr. Archibald Keightley, *Chairman*
Dr. C. C. Clark
Miss Agnes McCormack

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY T. S. FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 24TH, 1925

Each year it becomes increasingly difficult to "sum up" the activities of the Society, since, of those which are truly significant, more and more take place within the hearts and lives of our members. This supremely important change in attention and consciousness is naturally reflected in the reports just received from the Branch Secretaries. Although each gives a methodical account of Branch work, it is evident that facts and figures prove inadequate to represent the vitality of Branches. Even in T. S. reports, the heart does not readily trace its activities, but in one fashion or another all say: "We did so and so; but there is more—a centre from which we draw and which we seek to serve,—our confidence for the future is in it." If one were to ask whether they mean their connection with the Great Lodge,—some might at once answer, "Yes." Others might say that they had come closer to the heart of the Movement, through a new connection with Headquarters.

In large measure, this sense of the activity of an inner nucleus helps to account for the value which many foreign Branches attach to the reports, sent them from this office, on the meetings of the New York Branch. The four-page report often seems most inadequate when compared with the impression made by the meeting itself, but something of its vitality must succeed in getting itself transmitted within the words,—else how could they evoke clearer thinking and better living among the members of such diverse groups. The reports are used in various ways—the newest being for Study Class discussion, in combination with the Convention Reports. Such a class would give opportunity to make detailed applications in daily life, and to work out a plan of campaign against the common enemy within each one's citadel.

Service has long been the keynote of Branch Reports. This year the emphasis is laid on

the joy of having part in such a Movement. The *desire to become* what the Lodge must require in its servants, would perhaps better describe the spirit of most Branches, as they face the responsibilities of the future.

The pace quickens: what of those members who have not the incentive of Branch membership? Some are seeking admission to Branches, as corresponding members. Others feel their isolation but see no remedy: "Nobody to study with; nobody to talk with; nobody interested in Theosophy." They have, perhaps, "tried to make Theosophy contagious in their lives," but unsuccessfully. Is there no way in which we can be of use, they ask. Surely there must be, for such members occupy a perilous position. In all ages there have been solitary disciples, yet they were made of unusual stuff, characterized by one-pointedness, daring, and ardour—qualities that made their extraordinary achievements possible. Apparently it is given to few men to win the kingdom of heaven alone. Since our goal can be nothing less,—there must be ways in which our unattached members could link themselves more closely to the life of the Society. Those who are determined not to be submerged by the insistence of external life will have to devise and propose some means of closer participation. An effective demand from them would surely be met at Headquarters by an adequate response and glad co-operation.

The Quarterly Book Department has published four books: perhaps to mark the coming of our fiftieth anniversary.[1] While financially independent of the Society—not using a penny of its funds—the Book Department exists solely as its auxiliary, and not for money making. The books are our messengers; it rests with each individual member of the Society to bring them within the reach of inquirers. They could never interest the many: nor is it to be expected that they will impart corrective light to those who have been caught in the meshes of pseudo-Theosophy. Our field is, rather, among those who have attached themselves to no cult and who have failed to find in the religion of their childhood what their maturity demands. Theosophy has for them the answer to their questions, the incentive they need, the goal they desire. But it cannot be thrust upon them as a cure-all. Fulsome praise of some book or of its writer usually sets up a barrier. The enthusiasm we enjoy expressing often represents to our friends a displeasing emotionalism which repels them, and our arguments only lead to deeper misunderstanding. We need insight to discern souls which are ready for the message and in what form they can receive it. Selfless devotion and humility should lend us discernment.

Fragments, Volume III, is compiled from Cavé's contributions to the *Quarterly*, October, 1915 to January, 1925. They are well known to many of us, but now that we can view them as a whole, they reveal a deeper meaning. When a young man begins the active practice of his profession, he sees his preparatory training in a new light, and neglected subjects often assume importance. In this new volume of *Fragments* we find the note of the new cycle and much preparation for it.

Letters to Friends, by John Gerard, also makes a fresh appeal, in book form. The characteristic which was most generally commented upon by *Quarterly* readers now stands out still more clearly,—the sympathetic yet unsparing manner in which motives and subterfuges are laid bare. Readers used to say that they had a fencing match with the writer. Many a one laughingly admitted that, though alone in his own room, he found the hot blood mounting to his face when he saw his secret thoughts and weaknesses exposed,—crying out, "No fair," before he realized that only he himself saw that hidden enemy of his, whose native ugliness had been unmasked for him.

The Crest Jewel of Wisdom, translated by Charles Johnston, supplies such a rendering of this scripture as has not before been available in English. To acquaintance with the sources from which this classic arose, the translator adds experience in presenting Eastern thought to Western minds. There is an introduction which has not appeared before, and the second appendix is also new.

---

[1] These are: *Fragments*, Volume III, by Cavé.
Letters to Friends, by John Gerard.
The Crest Jewel of Wisdom, translated by Charles Johnston.
Plotinus, by Stanley V. LaDow.

Plotinus, by Stanley V. LaDow, gives a condensation of the teaching of Plotinus, and an interpretation which does much to clarify it. The truths which Plotinus unfolded from his life experience, some seventeen centuries ago, offer a new approach to the Wisdom revealed again through H. P. B., and afford basis for a broader understanding of the fundamentals of Theosophy.

New books require much proof reading, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge assistance in this from Doctor Keightley, who won his spurs in the proof reading of the first edition of the *Secret Doctrine*, and also from Mr. LaDow. Besides sharing in this work, Miss Chickering also has supplied the shorthand notes of the New York Branch meetings upon which the reports for the foreign Branches are based.

Were there sufficient demand, a lending library would be started, consisting of duplicate copies of these new books and other publications. Members might use such a library as a means of bringing our books to the attention of outsiders, who would be glad to borrow a book which they might hesitate to buy before they had seen it. Some simple arrangement of this sort could be made through the Quarterly Book Department, if desirable.

Our members certainly appreciate the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY; they frequently say so. Many of us have probably dreamed dreams of converting the world through it, only to find that even among our friends few were attracted by it. Our hopes may have been further disappointed by discovering, for ourselves, that salvation from self and its parasites is not secured by conning the wisest words. It would be a great mistake, however, to conclude that it is therefore useless to seek readers for the QUARTERLY. Such an attitude would be a poor response to the fiery ardour with which Masters create, for our enlightenment. Were not "wicked and slothful" the terms applied to that servant who merely preserved his master's talent, by burying it? To cry our magazine upon the housetops would be folly, but there are also the methods of the pearl merchant, who lets most men pass by, but seeks out those who are pearl lovers. Since our public must be small, all the more need that we should reach it. Will not each earnest member of the Society consider what he can do? From our Propaganda Fund abundant copies of the magazine can be provided for library use, or for individuals who appear to be ready for its message.

As the work of this office and its allied activities increases, we are most fortunate in the continuance of a special contribution (not recorded in the Treasurer's records), for the employment of a stenographer, in no way connected with the Society, to attend to routine work. Thanks are also due the Officers of the Society for their unfailing response to appeals on behalf of members or inquirers. Profound gratitude to the Masters is expressed by many of our Branches, for the support and guidance of our work,—and that feeling is shared by all who are privileged to participate in the activities at Headquarters.

Respectfully submitted,
ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, T. S.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not going to *ask* for a vote of thanks to the Secretary,—I am simply going to give you an opportunity to express the thanks, which at best will be a very inadequate expression of what we owe to the Secretary and to the Secretary's office. Something certainly ought to be said of the achievement in publishing those four new books at this time. The decision to issue them was made not long ago. It was an undertaking to find any Press which would contemplate getting them out by the date fixed for this Convention, so that they could be on sale at the public lecture on Sunday. How the Quarterly Book Department did it, by what combination of guile and enchantment, perhaps, Miss Perkins alone can tell. But you should realize that it was done at a time when her office was crowded with work for the Convention itself.

In reply to questions, Miss Perkins explained that this was done through the friendship gained by the QUARTERLY and the editors of the QUARTERLY,—their printer being prepared to undertake the impossible and to enjoy doing it!

On motion duly made and seconded, the Report of the Secretary T. S. was accepted with acclamation and thanks. The next business being the report of the Treasurer, Mr. Johnston was requested to take the Chair.

Report of the Treasurer, T. S.

Professor Mitchell: As in past years, the actual labour has all been performed by the Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs. It is to her that the Society is indebted for the keeping of the books and for all the work which must inevitably accompany the collection, the dispersion and the partial preservation of the small funds used by The Theosophical Society.

I need not repeat what you all know: that the Society and its magazine, the Quarterly, are unique in paying no salaries. We publish a periodical with no outlay except in payments to outsiders,—the printer, the paper maker, the postman, and the like. This is true of the whole conduct of the Society from top to bottom, and is the reason why we are able to do so much with our funds. The actual report differs little from that of last year:

April 27, 1924—April 25, 1925

Receipts		*Disbursements*		
Current Dues	$742.44	Pension		$240.00
General Contributions	403.79	Printing and mailing, Theosophical Quarterly (4 numbers)		2915.10
Propaganda Fund	1141.50	Stationery and Supplies		17.63
Subscriptions to Theosophical Quarterly	402.65	Postage		9.94
Donations to Theosophical Quarterly	192.34	Rent		150.00
	$2882.72	Miscellaneous:		
1926 Dues, prepaid	80.00	Telephone	$30.96	
		Flowers (Mrs. Gregg)	5.00	
Total receipts	2962.72			35.96
Balance April 26, 1924	1195.82	Total disbursements		3368.63
		Balance April 25, 1925		789.91
	$4158.54			$4158.54

Assets		*Liabilities*	
		1926 Dues, prepaid	$80.00
On deposit Corn Exchange Bank,		Excess of assets over liabilities	709.91
April 25, 1925	$789.91		$789.91

Henry Bedinger Mitchell,
Treasurer, The Theosophical Society.

April 25th, 1925.

It was moved, seconded and duly carried that the report be accepted, and that the best thanks of the Convention be tendered to the Treasurer and to the Assistant Treasurer. Professor Mitchell then resumed the Chair.

The Chairman called for the report of the Committee on Nominations.

Report of the Committee on Nominations and Election of Officers

Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell: The Committee on Nominations unanimously presents the following nominations: to succeed themselves in the two vacancies on the Executive Committee, Doctor Keightley and Mr. K. D. Perkins; and similarly, to succeed themselves, Miss Perkins as Secretary T. S.; Miss Chickering, as Assistant Secretary; Professor Mitchell as Treasurer T. S., and Miss Youngs, as Assistant Treasurer.

On motion, duly seconded and carried, the report of the Committee was adopted, and the Secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the officers nominated. This was done, and the nominees were declared elected.

The Chairman: We like to remember at these Conventions the faithful service, for very many years, of our former Secretary, Mrs. Gregg, now our Secretary Emeritus,—and to mark our remembrance by sending her some flowers. If that be your pleasure, I should be very glad to entertain such a motion. [This was voted, with enthusiasm, and the Chair appointed Mr. Woodbridge to carry out the wish of the Convention.]

The Chairman: All the members in New York would feel it a great pleasure if they could entertain at luncheon those members from a distance who have not made any other arrangements. It is obviously not possible for all of us to act as hosts, but Doctor Clark, Mr. Woodbridge, Mr. Saxe, and Mr. Auchincloss have especially asked to have that pleasure; also Miss Perkins, Miss Lewis, Miss Wood and Miss Kane. If there are any visitors who have not already made arrangements, will they please speak to any one of those whose names I have read; it will be their pleasure to provide for luncheon.

After various announcements, the Convention adjourned until 2:30 P.M.

Afternoon Session

The first report called for was that of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting

At the request of Doctor Keightley, the Chairman of the Committee, Doctor Clark presented the letters from the European and American Branches. He called particular attention to the fact that many of those Branches were then assembled, keeping the Convention hours with us, earnestly desiring closer union in duty and the blessing of the Masters upon our work. He commented also upon the unanimity of the understanding shown in their letters, that it is in our power to form a mould for the future, and that by quiet, interior effort we may accomplish marvellous results through the special opportunity given by the new cycle. The letters from the English Branches were read and commented upon by Doctor Keightley.

The Chairman: The letters which have just been read to us will be printed in full in the Theosophical Quarterly, at the end of the Convention Report, as usual. I listen to them always with enormous interest, and with a sense of surprise which ought to have been outgrown, as we discover anew, each year, how closely our distant members have followed the same line of thought that we have ourselves been following. In these letters that we have just heard, there are almost the same similes as those used this morning—certainly the same central theme —and this may serve to show how close the overshadowing inspiration of the Movement comes to all of us.

The Chairman then read a cablegram which had been received from Mrs. Graves, Mrs. Bagnell, and Miss Hope Bagnell, of the Norfolk Branch in England: "Best wishes for Convention."

The report of the Committee on Resolutions was next on the order of business.

Report of the Committee on Resolutions

Mr. Hargrove: It is my first duty to present for your approval the three following resolutions:

1. That Mr. Johnston be authorized to reply to the Letters of Greeting.
2. That the Convention requests and authorizes visits of officers of the Society to Branches.
3. That the thanks of the Convention be expressed to the New York Branch for its hospitality and for the use of the room in which the Convention is held.

I shall postpone, if I may, what all of us must wish said in regard to the Letters of Greeting, which form, this year as always, one of the greatest contributions to the Convention.

There is a fourth resolution which your Committee wishes to present to you, involving an amendment of one of the By-Laws of the Society. Number 41 of the By-Laws provides that By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote at any Convention of the Society, which means that you, as delegates, are free to act as you see best in this case.

One of our By-Laws provides that the Executive Committee shall have power to expel from the Society, after proper investigation and due hearing, anyone deemed unworthy of further membership by reason of violations of brotherhood, whenever, in its opinion, the reputation and well-being of the Society make such a course desirable. The trouble with that By-Law as it stands, is that it makes possible a great deal of quibbling on the subject of what is and is not brotherhood, and what is a violation of brotherhood. Any organization such as ours, once in a while collects a stray lunatic from its environment, and it is only fair to the Society itself, and, quite seriously, to the Masters who founded it, that the name Theosophy and The Theosophical Society shall not be compromised by the antics of such people. It is really necessary to be in a position to act, for your protection and for the protection of the Society. So the members of the Executive Committee in New York, feeling that it would be your wish to deal with this subject, asked me to submit to the Committee on Resolutions a modification of the present wording. The Committee therefore proposes:

4. That By-Law No. 2 shall be amended to read as follows: "The Executive Committee shall have power to exclude from membership, and to remove from the Society, and to debar from its meetings, any one whose membership shall be considered detrimental to the best interests of the Society."

That new wording, instead of limiting action to violations of brotherhood, gives the Executive Committee the right, without further appeal, to treat "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" (to use the Army phrase) as an offence warranting expulsion.

After the three earlier resolutions had been voted, collectively, the fourth resolution, embodying this Amendment, was seconded by Doctor Hohnstedt in his capacity as a member of the Committee, it having been impossible for the Chairman of the Committee to reach him when the Amendment was under consideration,—and the resolution was thereupon adopted unanimously.

Mr. Hargrove: In times past, you have permitted the Chairman of this Committee to attempt to say certain things on your behalf, not in the way of formal resolutions, but as voicing the sentiment of the Convention. So much was suggested this morning in Professor Mitchell's opening address that I think it would be helpful to see if we cannot gain more light from the principles then laid down. It was suggested that it is the duty of members of The Theosophical Society to set their faces like flint against certain modern tendencies, and, whenever possible, to attack those tendencies; but we were obliged to deal with the problem rather generally.

In last Monday's *New York Times*, there was a report of a number of sermons delivered the day before. One of these was headed: "Explains Spiritual Slump." It was a sermon by a Doctor Walter M. Turnbull, at the Gospel Tabernacle Church, on Eighth Avenue. I do not know him, but am sure he meant well; I am sure he would be regarded by all his friends as a

devoutly religious man. He is reported to have said: "The well never doubt; it is the weary who do, and Satan hovers like a vulture over the weakening. Christians are not in trouble when they are well fed and cared for. . . . *Our love of Christ comes when our wants have been satisfied.*"

You laugh, and I do not wonder; but those statements were made by the preacher in all seriousness, and I quote them because of my conviction that he uttered that which many other preachers act upon but do not utter,—not, in any case, with the same simple directness! His words are an epitome of the modern belief,—of the very worldly belief voiced years ago in *Punch*. You may remember the picture: a young married woman consulting an older married woman about the management of her husband, and the answer was, "Feed the brute!"

Expressed in a sermon, it is a sign of the times. It means that materialism, no longer fashionable as a philosophy, practically is still dominant. The materialism of science has passed into the churches, to a greater or less degree of course, depending upon circumstances. And this concerns us, for it is something to which the theosophical philosophy is diametrically opposed. To say that love of Christ—love of spiritual things, of the ideal—comes when a man is well fed and when his other wants (whatever they may be) have been satisfied, is sheer nonsense, in flat contradiction of human experience. It is not true and never has been true, and never will be. So there we have one direction in which we can and should attack a huge illusion, confronting it with the truth, which is that most men turn to the things of the spirit as the result of bitter suffering only; that the under-fed person is far better off than the over-fed person, even physically, and that the things of the body are of no value and of no power whatsoever, even in this life, in comparison with the value and the power of the things of the soul.

Let me take another illustration: in the *New York Times* of this morning there was an editorial on the subject of Mrs. Haldane's reminiscences. Writing when she was over a hundred years old, she said that when she was three she was taught to read English and to speak French. When she was eight she had read the whole of Voltaire's history of Louis XIV and Peter the Great, and had looked up all the French words she did not know, and had written them out. In the evening her father read aloud Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Cowper, Dryden and other poets. "Our education was good," she wrote, "inasmuch as we read classical works and not textbooks. What we read then has remained in my mind till this day."

If a modern child were brought up like that, all the friends of the family would say that his parents were killing him, and were depriving him of his youth! Yet this old lady lives to be a hundred, keeps a young heart, remembers all that she learned as a little child, and glories in the fact that what she learned then was worth learning. Is she not rich in comparison with men of a later generation, prematurely old in comparison with her, who cling to life only by clinging to the desire for one more round of golf,—to the desire, without always possessing the ability?

Not long ago a young man said to me: "Well, after all, we are young only once, and we may as well have a good time while we have the chance." Young only once! He was vitally mistaken, alas, alas! We are young dreadfully often. If he could look back at his own past, he would see an almost endless repetition of childishness. What he called "having a good time" amounts to that and no more; and he ought to have outgrown the desire for it: that is the point. Those who respect the soul should see that there are pleasures, amusements, "thrills," which belong only to hopeless immaturity, regardless of age,—to "baby egos," as H. P. B. called them. Parents should not insult their children by placing them—before they can speak for themselves—in that category. If, later, a craving for such things develops, which neither persuasion nor force can deal with, time enough for the parents to resign themselves to having brought into the world such an unfortunate distortion of their hopes! But such cravings should never be regarded as normal, as inevitable; and to attempt to force them upon children against their own inclination, on the theory that it is their first and last chance to be young, is little short of criminal.

There is another direction in which we can see the application of what was said this morning, —the domain of good manners. I am afraid that those who know me intimately will feel that I ought to have delegated the subject to some other member of the Committee; but in spite of

one's known shortcomings, one can at least recognize an ideal and revere it; and part of my ideal for The Theosophical Society would be that its members should be known by their charm of manner. How proud we should all feel if someone were pointed out for the simplicity and beauty of his manners, and if this were explained on the ground of his membership in the Society! Yet perhaps some day we shall attain those heights!

There were times in the past when manners were codified,—that is to say, there was a standard of good form, a standard of behaviour, a rigid rule of etiquette. Such a code existed in many parts of Asia, where every detail of a man's life was provided for, and all his behaviour determined, to the slightest inclination of head or hand. Something of the same sort existed years ago, in certain walks of life, in France, Spain and elsewhere. In Asia, one result of a hard and fast code was that class hatred did not exist. It is only in countries where all men are equal that it can exist! The Chinese would never have abandoned their old standards if good Americans had not pursued them for years with ridicule and contempt, decrying their inherited customs, and assuring them that freedom was all they needed to make them happy. We in the West, having thrown off our "shackles" a very long time ago, are supposed to know how happy we are in our freedom, and perhaps are not supposed to know that the world has defeated its own ends, and has made human relations infinitely more complicated and difficult—no one knowing how to treat anybody else—by its wild defiance of restraint. It is as if, in the name of freedom, all traffic regulations, in New York, or any other big city, were to be withdrawn,—and the police as well. You know what would happen! And that is exactly what is happening in the modern world,—the result that always follows the efforts of the personality to escape from restraint: confusion, ugliness, discord, licence, discomfort. None the less, philosophies are invariably invented to justify what man has already done, so the world now has a large stock of philosophies on hand, designed to show the superlative advantages of freedom,—individual, social, political and so on. Students of Theosophy, needless to say, are not impressed!

I do not mean, of course, that the old codes of domestic and social behaviour were either perfect in themselves or unfailing in result; but their advantages so greatly outweighed their disadvantages, that they would never have been abandoned if men and women, through their own deterioration of spirit, had not sapped the life from manners and turned them into an empty ritual. They sprang originally from consideration for other people; they were the product of ages of experience which had proved that in order to avoid friction and to preserve harmony, it was best to do things in such and such a way, and that there was a right time and place for everything. Confucius, who codified the Chinese laws of etiquette, declared explicitly that he was not inaugurating, but was passing on the accumulated experience of ancestors. In the same way, it is not for us to be innovators, but to preserve the best of the past. Once we understand clearly and, if possible, in detail, how the old codes sprang from right consideration, from brotherly love—in other words, from the spiritual plane; once we see clearly the evil and unpleasant consequences of the modern "go-as-you-please" attitude, we shall be inspired to revive in our own behaviour, and, if possible, in the esteem of the world, the real consideration, the real reverence, the real respect, which must necessarily be expressed in ways—or manners—as old as their spirit.

It has been said that one of this country's most serious deficiencies is its lack of reverence, though I doubt if that lack be greater here than it is to-day in many of the countries of Europe. In any case, we should do what we can to show that reverence is an attribute of the soul; that it is essential to real life, and that lack of reverence is merely another blind spot of the materialist who sees and respects nothing but his own comfort, or, at best, the physical comfort of a few other people. At the same time and as part of the same campaign, we should set our faces against slipshod, self-indulgent, free-and-easy behaviour, seizing our opportunity, in our own lives and in our own homes, to stand for all that was best in the past, infusing the old with a new and better spirit,—if we can.

It seems to me to be the duty of your Committee on Resolutions to suggest such possible applications of what was said this morning, and to voice thoughts which doubtless have occurred to many of you already; but it is our privilege also to send forth from this Convention a message

to those whose greetings were read to us a few minutes ago. We should like, if we knew how, to tell those people, those fellow members of ours—whether in Venezuela or in England or in Norway or Sweden or France or elsewhere—we should like to tell them something of the joy with which we listened to their greetings. We should like them to know with what fostering solicitude their lives and work are followed; the intense interest that is taken in their activities, in their welfare,—personal as well as spiritual. It would be invidious to single out the achievements of any one national centre, just as it is impossible to speak of all of them. Whether we think of members in Sweden or Norway, in England or Venezuela, and of all that members in Venezuela have done in adverse circumstances to hold aloft the torch of Theosophy throughout Central and Southern America,—the result is the same: we must be full of wonder, full of praise, and full, too, of desire to do anything that can possibly be done to aid them in real and lasting ways. Let us specially remember, however, the splendid life and record of Juan José Benzo, described in the letter from Venezuela as "the unforgettable founder" of the Theosophical Movement in that country; Hjalmar Julin in Sweden, one of our oldest and most loyal members; and Colonel Knoff and the other members in Norway—all of whom would be the first to give him the credit for having held the Movement there together—for years keeping in touch with Headquarters through brief contact and much correspondence with Mr. Griscom. And that gives me an excuse to mention something that I omitted this morning when speaking of Mr. Griscom,—the book by John Gerard, *Letters to Friends*, which the Quarterly Book Department has just published. The last of those Letters contains a fine tribute to Mr. Griscom. Allow me to ask you to re-read it.

The Chair then expressed the wish of the Convention to hear from the other members of the Committee on Resolutions, and from as many delegates as possible.

DR. HOHNSTEDT: I am not a public speaker, but I want to say that I have been very glad I came here. This is the second Convention I have attended in New York—1919 and this year; and this Convention, the closing of our fiftieth year, I did not want to miss. In fact, I have been striving to come here through the whole year, and finally managed to come. The occasion reminds me that the Society is entering the autumn season, and it is necessary for us to see that the perennials that we have put in, are well taken care of and given proper nourishment, to carry over through the next quarter, the winter season,—that, when the teacher comes, they may bring forth their flower. It is up to us to see to it and to work along that line as much as we possibly can. When we have done that, I think the Master expects no more. And we should do it always, thinking not of the benefit we derive from it, or that it is our duty, but do it because the Master wants us to do it.

MR. KOBBÉ: When Mr. Hargrove, speaking of that old English joke in *Punch*, quoted "feed the brute," it occurred to me that there might be various ways of feeding the brute, and here and there there might be wives who would manage to feed the brute in such a way as to refine him. We might find a lesson in that, taking away from this Convention a way of feeding the brute so that he would become more refined. We have all read how the Master K. H. multiplied rice so as to feed the hungry, and the Master Christ multiplied the loaves and fishes. There is a lesson there that we use the materials at hand. We do not need to reach out to something that is distant and not a part of our surroundings,—the material is there if we will use it. And as we go away from this Convention to our various localities, conditions, circumstances, vicissitudes, perhaps we might take that thought with us; and out of our storehouses which have been so bountifully filled and are so ceaselessly being filled by those great ones from above, we might offer one gem,—the gem of gratitude, set in faith, on the chain of service, each link of which, let us hope, is forged through sacrifice.

MISS RICHMOND: I was asked to bring the loving greetings of the Pacific Branch of Los Angeles, and I know how their hearts will be cheered by what has been said here to-day. Their hearts reach out to the people here in New York. They wait eagerly for any little crumb from a table which to them seems so rich. They asked me to tell you that they are with you to-day.

THE CHAIRMAN: I know that you will be writing to them, and I beg that you will take from this Convention the greeting that will be sent formally by Mr. Johnston,—but you will give it a certain warmth of colour which we should very much wish to have go back from the Convention to them.

MR. J. F. B. MITCHELL: The first thing I always want to do at these Conventions is to take advantage of the opportunity to express the deepest gratitude for being here at all, and for what we are privileged to hear here, and for the ideal that we are brought in touch with and that The Theosophical Society stands for.

I have been asking myself since we heard Mr. Hargrove's address this morning, how those words could be applied, what there was to do about it, and how we could bring it right down into the life of each one of us. My daughter heard I was coming to the Convention last night, and discussed the matter with the gardener; then said, "Daddy, Emile wants to know what the Society stands for—is it to have a good time?" I said, "What do you think it is for?" and she answered, "To help people to be better."

If we are going to follow Mr. Hargrove's simile,—are going to stand on the second wall and watch our unseen leaders plunge down into the fight, what are we going to do next? What does it mean to follow? It does not mean to have a good time. A picture came to my mind of a great man who did stand on a wall like that once—Alexander the Great. He and his men were besieging a city. He and two of his generals alone had nerve enough to reach the top of the wall. The ladder broke. His men called to him to jump. He jumped forward and not back, down into the city. And then what did following mean? Those men used everything they had to get over that wall, climbed on each other's shoulders, anything to follow those leaders. A man cannot hold up his head very long if he will not follow at a time like that.

But what does it mean to follow? We know the first thing we have to do is to attack the evil in ourselves. Professor Mitchell was speaking of taking that as material for fertilizer,—our faults and so forth. If we have hurt feelings we can rejoice in the hurt and say: At least there is something real, some force available, and I am going to get it. There is force that we can draw out from those hurt feelings, and so, follow. That is one way; but there is another that we need to think about as we advance into the third quarter of a century of the life of the Society. We have been brought up in the glamour of the world. We should be most unwise to think that it had not soaked into our bones. We have not separated ourselves from the world nor from the standards and ideals of the world. We have got to pierce through that glamour. The Theosophical Movement pierces the glamour, throws its searchlight beam through the fog, throws it in a narrow line, and we must get behind it and see by means of it. Our unseen leaders have gone on. They have carried the light forward, and we must follow that light. When new ideals are presented, sometimes they are not our ideals, so far as we know. Yet they *are* our ideals in reality, and it may be that by the grace of the high gods we shall see that it is so, and say—thank God that *is* my ideal; I never saw it before; but the chances are that we cannot get the vision until we have earned it, and we cannot earn it except by descending into semi-darkness. So when our leaders call us, there may be a wall between; their view of truth may not be recognized as ours; but if we say: "That is an exaggeration; it is not necessary to do that; I believe in doing these things, but in moderation,"—surely that is not to follow; that is not even an effort to scale the wall.

To follow means to say, "Well, I do not see that yet, but I am going to work as if it were so and find out; I am going to take it and go ahead whether I see or do not see, and try it out." It is beyond where we are, perhaps, but take it, test it. We have got to recognize that our vision is partial vision, blinded by the glamour of the world in which we have been soaked ever since we were born.

When things are said about democracy, about modern education, they probably go against the early training of everybody in the room. What are we going to say: This thing is right because it agrees with my ideal? Or are we going to say, that is where the light seems to lead; I am going to take it, examine it, act accordingly, and see what happens, pray for the light to see, and get more. We all know what we have received; that what we have received is more than anything else in life to us. We must learn how to receive more, and not to say as one of

Alexander's men might have said, "I brought a battering ram to break down this wall, but I am not going to scale it." It seems to me that that is one of the lessons we can learn, one of the questions we can ask ourselves: What does it mean to follow? And then work it out, each one for himself, in detail—and then follow.

It was now moved, seconded, and carried that the report of the Committee on Resolutions be accepted with thanks—but that the Committee itself be retained until the close of the session. The report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting was similarly voted upon, and the Committee discharged with thanks.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next business before the Convention is the reports from our delegates, Branches, and members-at-large whom we have the pleasure of having with us to-day. Will Mrs. Gordon report for the Middletown Branch?

MRS. GORDON: Although I am no longer sharing in the active work of the Middletown Branch, accounts of it are sent to me, from time to time—and I heard from there just before Convention. There seems to be new life; members who were formerly inactive or indifferent are beginning to take part, and outsiders are making inquiries about Theosophy at the semi-monthly meetings. The Branch has been re-reading *Letters That Have Helped Me*, and *The Ocean of Theosophy*,—and is now taking up *The Key to Theosophy*. There is a general feeling of encouragement, as they face the coming year.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are fortunate to-day in having with us four members from the Branch at Cincinnati, and I am going to call on Mr. Herman Hohnstedt, who has been the Vice President and acting Chairman of that Branch, to speak to us.

MR. HOHNSTEDT: Mr. Chairman, Fellow Members—Mr. Hargrove said something about charm, and I am satisfied that I voice the feelings of all the delegates present when I call attention to the fact that we all feel the charm of this Convention and the charm displayed by the New York Branch of this Society. If we make any progress in the spiritual life, charm becomes one of our attributes. It seems to me, unless charm and beauty are present, we can rest assured that something is lacking in our spiritual nature. A great many things were said here this morning, and so well said that I feel I would rather listen than speak. But in this disintegration or separation that is taking place, I think that if we keep in mind the three qualities of Tamas, Rajas and Sattva, we shall get an idea of the cycle we all have to go through in any direction in order to attain to true spirituality. We are inert to a great many things. When our conscience is awakened to any one of them, perhaps there is a selfish longing to obtain it. Yet it may not be really selfish at that particular period of our evolution. Only as we learn more about it, indulgence may make it selfish. Finally, we renounce indulgence. To follow, we must know what we are fighting. We must have some vision as to where we are going.

The Theosophical Society has been holding meetings continuously in Cincinnati since 1886. There are some members who never miss a meeting,—one of our delegates has been at every meeting for at least ten years. We are trying to present Theosophy along right lines, and we hope to remain steadfast.

MISS MCCORMACK: I feel a little ashamed, after being a member so long, of having this report to make: As I was leaving Cincinnati, the young lady with whom I work asked if I was going to the T. S. Convention, and then said, "Well, how about that movement—do you feel that you have had much material success and good health and all those things? Is that what it is?" It never struck me in that way! I told her so, and explained that we tried to attain the ideal of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. That puts me in mind of what Mr. Hargrove was saying this morning, because everybody is looking for something that will better his material condition. Until we are asked that question, we do not know what is in the minds of our fellow workers. In time I shall hope to disabuse her mind of that idea.

MISS HOHNSTEDT: Nothing remains to be said about the Cincinnati Branch, but I am delighted to have the chance to say how glad I am to be here; it is five years since I was here before. Our attendance at the Branch meetings has not been large but they have been interesting meetings,—and both members and visitors have been impressed with what we have been doing this winter. Many questions have been asked and answered—frequently we have had

to extend the time in order to deal with them. We have a lending library of between two and three hundred volumes, which are at the disposal of any inquirer. Because of illness in his family, our President has been able to attend only one meeting this year—so each of us has felt bound to make greater effort than ever before.

MR. T. J. DANNER: There is a little additional joy in our trip this time, due to the fact that we come as regularly elected delegates, instead of as members-at-large. Last year we were forcibly but most lovingly charged with the thought that, unless these meetings stirred up the determination to take back all the good things we heard, to help us carry on, to a degree at least,—the Convention would not accomplish all that was possible. Realizing that, the Pittsburgh members went home last year with a realization that there was one particular job for them to do,—that of keeping alive a spark which had been fighting for development for a long while. That spark to-day has developed into a small light. It is due to that small light that we are privileged to be here to-day as regular delegates. We expect to go back with renewed inspiration and determination to keep that light burning and to fight as best we can for those principles which we have heard expressed so beautifully to-day,—principles for which the Masters stand.

The note of the day seems to be that of joy, in a way,—a joy which should make us feel that we are glad that we are alive to fight and to pray and to serve. I can best express my feeling of appreciation by saying to you, fellow members, that my heart is full, and full for you.

MRS. DANNER then spoke, referring to Emerson as her stepping-stone to Theosophy, and quoting, as expressive of her feeling with regard to the Convention, the following from his poem, "The Celestial Love":

Higher far into the pure realm,
Over sun and star,
Over the flickering Dæmon film,
Thou must mount for love;
Into vision where all form
In one only form dissolves;
In a region where the wheel
On which all beings ride
Visibly revolves;
Where the starred, eternal worm
Girds the world with bound and term;
Where unlike things are like;
Where good and ill,
And joy and moan,
Melt into one.
There Past, Present, Future, shoot
Triple blossoms from one root;
Substances at base divided,
In their summits are united;
There the holy essence rolls,
One through separated souls;
And the sunny Æon sleeps
Folding nature in its deeps,
And every fair and every good,
Known in part, or known impure,
To men below,
In their archetypes endure.
The race of gods,
Or those we erring own,
Are shadows flitting up and down
In the still abodes.

The circles of that sea are laws
Which publish and which hide the cause.
Pray for a beam
Out of that sphere,
Thee to guide and to redeem.

MR. WOODBRIDGE: I should hate to speak for Boston, my opinion of it being what it is, and I do not feel it is fair to speak for New York; so I am going to ask your permission to come to the defence of babies. I do not think they have been treated fairly to-day. Mr. Hargrove has pitched into youth, meaning immaturity. I am afraid we may forget that the proper study of mankind is baby,—because baby is so much wiser than we are. The baby starts in at four months old, and realizes that materialism is a lie. This is proved by the fact that while science tells us we see upside down, the baby immediately and quite unconsciously starts to reverse the process. The trouble with the present day is that we are getting away from our babyhood. What we are doing is to stand on our heads. We are told by scientists that the eye sees upside down, so we stand on our heads. I do not know but that the explanation of the Bolshevist's seeing red is due to rush of blood from standing on his head. Youth, standing on its head, considers that it sees everything it wishes to see, because its head is close to the ground. It thinks there is no heaven—it eats dirt, because that is the nearest thing it sees and the only thing. Youth forgets what happened to those men from the Garden of Eden,—the story of the monkey. The men who were turned out of the Garden of Eden said, "Let us look up and worship glamour. It is glamour to look at the sun." So they climbed to the tree tops, forgot about work, looked at the sun and gradually developed long arms, tails, etc. Many of us are like those monkeys who devoted themselves to glamour and not to work. We have on the one hand the paradox, that at every moment we see ourselves as increasingly unworthy of what we get, while, on the other hand, comes the miracle of modern life, that through Theosophy we dare hope. When that description was given to-day of standing on the top of a wall, I am sure we all realized that breaking the homeliest habit can be made to mean fighting behind Alexander. We are part of the universe. No sin—nothing—ever is separate from the universe; so we can attack in ourselves what is contemptible in it, and so follow the leaders.

MLLE. THÉRÈSE C. SAUNIER: We have no Branch yet in France. I hope we shall have one soon. I cannot speak, then, from a Branch, but I shall speak from my deep gratitude to you and to many people here. It is so very big, my gratitude, that I do not find words to express it. One thought I have is the tremendous belief—a belief beyond words—that Theosophy is the thing for the world. I could really die for it. It is so big, so true, so real. I have realized it increasingly as I have lived among the Catholics—among the priests and the nuns—and among the University people, in France.

MRS. REGAN: I want to express my gratitude for the privilege of being here, and to say that it is my earnest and sincere wish that the members of Hope Branch may grow into the realization of the privilege that is theirs, of the responsibility that is theirs, and, most important of all, of the opportunity that is theirs. The report for the Branch will be made by our Secretary, Mrs. Rose.

MRS. ROSE: No report from Hope Branch would be complete if I did not say how happy we are and how grateful to be here, and how we have looked forward to it,—particularly this year, because we are members of Hope Branch. We have been fortunate in receiving reports of the New York Branch meetings. The afternoon study class has been continued, and at that we have used simpler work,—the "Elementary Articles" of Mr. Griscom and other articles from the QUARTERLY. I should like to say just a word for those members of the study class who have joined the Branch this year. I think we already feel it is our home in a real sense (Convention is our larger home); it is the place to which we find ourselves going for strength, for inspiration in our daily lives; and already, it seems to me, there is a greater unity of purpose. I hope that, given time, we shall show our appreciation of this wonderful thing that has been given us.

MR. MILLER: I have been thinking of last year's Convention, when the keynote was the

idea of giving—we were told not to "give until it hurts," but until it heals, blesses and redeems. What, I wonder, have we been able to gain from such effort, that we can use in the new cycle on which we are entering? To-day it has been made clear that we must have the cause of Masters at heart before we can be of help to the cause of Theosophy, in any real sense. What we have heard to-day throws much light on the means by which we can get rid of those obstacles within ourselves that block progress. We had perhaps realized, at times, that we were in a current set in a direction opposite to that of our real desires, but it has been made very vivid for us here. We have been helped to see how strong the current of the world is,—and that we are permeated with it without being conscious of the fact. The force of this Convention has lifted us out of self, and given us light that should help us for years to come.

DR. TORREY: I stand in the paradoxical situation of being a member-at-large with a Branch. I decided that I could not be a member-at-large all alone, so I got some of the boys [students in a college] together, and we have a Branch (not *really* of the Society), but we are studying just the same.

Youth has been "slammed" here to-day! Young men are not so black as they are painted. They do not know the way. I have yet to find a man working for Phi Beta Kappa not interested in Theosophy. The thoughts that lie back of the Theosophical Movement are the thoughts that young men to-day want to think about. We took the Plotinus articles in the QUARTERLY and read them together. That was pretty stiff, but those boys got it, and I was amazed at their understanding. Then we took *Revolutions of Civilization*, by Flinders Petrie. Then, last of all, the *Gita*—we all come back to it sooner or later. Of course, there have been technical points that we could not resolve, but the boys have kept coming, and undoubtedly they have been getting a great deal out of it. So I guess we will go on for another year.

MR. GRANT: I can only speak for myself to-day as I have not been in Toronto, where my Branch is, for several years. Shortly before the *Titanic* went down, with Stead on board, he was asked whether he still maintained his interest in psychic problems and research. His reply was that there was nothing else in life worth living for,—and, in my better moments, that is the way I feel about Theosophy. I have been a member for thirteen years, and as time goes on, I am impressed that it is a great and glorious thing to belong to a society where harmony and tolerance prevail—no violent bickering about Modernism and Fundamentalism—one which engenders research, and looks upon accomplishment as of more importance than the motions by which things are done. If one wishes to spread such teaching, the only way would appear to be to live such lives that they will preach for us—few care to listen to sermons in any other form—and it is my experience that often those who seem most unreceptive are not really so.

MR. C. RUSSELL AUCHINCLOSS: To many of us to-day, there must have come a feeling that has come at many Conventions,—the feeling of being raised up, apart from the hurry and bustle of the world, to a place where right self-identification was easy. It is a feeling similar to that which came to men in France when they went from the base ports to the front lines, that feeling of quickening, of tension, of heightening of power, so that it was easy to function, straight along, on a higher level. Why did they feel that in France? Not because they were where death was, but because they found themselves in a greater concentration of life than they had felt before, just as here at Convention time. But those same men, when they came back from the trenches, were conscious of letting down to lower levels of activity, just as so many of us, after Convention, feel a letting down to lower planes of thought, of feeling, of understanding. Why is that? Why can we not hold ourselves permanently on the level we want to be on? We know the way. It is the same in whatever terms we think of it. There are many of us here to whom the events of that first Good Friday, that first Easter, are very vivid and fresh —the words spoken on the cross: "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." To-day, not later on,—because the turning about had been complete, the self-sacrifice and self-surrender. The door of heaven was open, and for the thief, as there may be for us here and now, there was Paradise.

MR. VAIL: In all the inspired words we have heard, what impresses a young man most is this—that there is something to do; and we are most grateful that these good people do not

get tired of prodding us on, even when we stop to consider, between our steps forward. There is a very prevalent tendency to think that if only circumstances were changed, all would be easy for us,—yet after imagining one's circumstances greatly altered and enlarged, one sees that there is nothing that could give more permanent satisfaction than that offered by Theosophy. Other paths may look more attractive at the start, and may promise easier conditions—but who wants to go where they lead?

MRS. GITT: I am thankful to Mr. Hargrove for what he said about the Letters of Greeting to this Convention—they seem to me to contain the best formulations of Theosophy that we have had. It is a great thing to have the grit to hold on, as many of those Branches have done, —and it is a telling point for Theosophy that they can do it. To me all truth, wherever discovered, is Theosophy. There are too many sectarian religions in the world already, and I am anxious that we should not add another to them by narrowing it down. Being a member-at-large, I am free to work according to my own fashion—I do not care anything about organizations; they have too many "go-alongers" and "lollers." People say that you must have a Branch, but I like being a member-at-large, for I feel free to work according to my own fashion, and am not held down by the whims or the lack of study on the part of Branch associates. I discover that many people are anxiously inquiring about the teachings of the Christian Master—what they mean and how to apply them. Surely the whole truth is there, but in order to get it out, most of us to-day need the help of the Oriental conception and interpretation of life.

MRS. LAKE: I think I shall simply reiterate what the other members of Hope Branch have said,—that we feel that Theosophy is the really vital thing in the lives of all of us, the only thing that really means life to us. Our study class and Branch meetings mean so much to us all. We come to the Convention for our inspiration, and here gain power to go on and, by that inspiration, carry Theosophy, by our lives, to others.

MRS. TALBOT: I should like to express my gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity of becoming a member of the Hope Branch, and to Mrs. Regan for her extension of that privilege.

MISS HENRY: I can only say that it is quite impossible for me to express my feeling at being here. I have been a member-at-large for nine and a half years, and this is the first time that I have met the real Theosophy. But having fed regularly and liberally on the QUARTERLY, I feel that I have been sustained. The QUARTERLY has now been presented to me somewhat in the form of a pageant. There is this difference between reading the QUARTERLY and being here to-day: A few days ago, I heard a fine band give a series of musical compositions in a hall of good proportions. It was a delightful experience. A few nights later, I heard the same band give the same performance over the radio. I would rather hear it that way than not at all, but how much I lost! All the shading was gone—not all, but the shading at the two ends of the scale (the overtones) were gone. Well, to-day I have had the shading and the overtones. I thank you for it.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: There is always the risk that the Chairman will have been staring right in the face of someone whom he knows well and has been longing to have speak, without having seen that person in the least. Is there not someone else whom I want to call on, and who is hiding from me? If not, then the time has come to draw this Convention to a close.

Permit me to say, as Chairman, a word or two in summing up—not that I believe it is in any way possible to make any true summing up in words of a real meeting of The Theosophical Society. I am afraid that I do not agree with what we heard said of the futility of Branches. I am afraid I do not think that Mr. Judge would have subscribed to it, nor do I think that it is in line with the fundamental principles upon which the Society rests. Rather do I believe that we are founded on the truth whose statement we find in all great religions, and which we of the West can perhaps recognize most clearly in those familiar lines: Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. So Mr. Judge would have said: where two or three are gathered together in the name of the Higher Self, there something of its truth, its spirit, would live; and into the hearts and minds of that group, if they sought it unselfishly, there would come something more of that spirit, something more of that truth,

than they had known before. Three legs will enable a stool to stand firmly. It is a very tottery performance when it tries to stand on one leg. The theosophical method, the theosophical principle, the theosophical attitude, are all founded upon the assumption that its work is group work, that it is united work; that no single statement of the truth will ever be adequate; that no single mind can ever cramp and cabin the whole, but that reflection from many minds, as from many facets, is requisite, and that as these are brought together, some sense of the unity of truth, some notion of its completeness, may come to each and all of us.

Therefore it is not in the least my hope that I can put into any words the spirit that would sum up this Convention, nor that I could be able to enunciate the central truth that lies behind what you have heard. Each one must do this for himself in his own heart and soul, and —in so far as the mind can reflect it—in his mind as well. You cannot take *all* of it away. You will each take away but a fragment, which you must pick and choose for yourselves. Yet I can perhaps underscore, as it were, some of the things that have been said, and by that underscoring bring out their unity. Let me turn to one thing which, perhaps, differentiates The Theosophical Society from most of the other philosophical movements of the day—the importance that it attaches to consciousness, making it primary and causal. In the meetings of the New York Branch this winter, it has been emphasized, as it is in all the Society's literature, that causes arise from within and work outward; that the outer world is but the effect, a shadow cast upon a screen, of what goes on within the minds and souls of men; and that therefore consciousness is causal. That, I believe, is one of the things which any understanding of Theosophy will lead us to stress and re-stress, and to turn to again and again for the correction of any opinions that we may have. Consciousness is causal; and if that be true, then the powers of consciousness must be of pre-eminent importance,—and chief and simplest of those is understanding. Can we not seek to understand what has been said, to dwell upon it, view it, turn it over in our own minds, put it, as it were, on the back of the mental stove to brew, to simmer, to condense, until we understand it better than we did at first? Understanding of a truth is vital to the life of that truth. What does it mean when we say that the Theosophical Movement has survived the turn of the century? Well, it means far more than we shall ever be able to say. We use the words, but we do not know a thousandth part of their meaning. But it is nothing new to use words whose meanings we do not completely know. With each added experience, with each deepening of the heart of our lives, we find that, though we must use the old words, there is a new level which we have penetrated, and we stand baffled at our impotence to convey the new discovery in anything other than the old forms. In that case, surely, for us, truth lived not in words, not in mere form, but in our understanding, in our penetration into it. The words were the same as before, but they had come to mean something more and deeper.

There, at least, is one thing which the survival of the Theosophical Movement must mean. It must mean that there has remained in our midst some understanding of its purposes, some understanding of what it is all about, some recognition that it comes from the Lodge and that its heart is in the Lodge. And if the Movement is to continue, that is what must remain, we must continue to have clear understanding. If our notion of the Lodge travesty it, are we keeping alive the consciousness of the Lodge in the world, or are we replacing it in the world by a caricature, by a psychic perversion, by its opposite? There is, therefore, one very simple thing which each of us can do to aid in the survival of the Theosophical Movement. We may be able to do very little, but that little we should do. We should strive to *understand*, to open our minds, to think about these things, to hold them in consciousness.

A moment ago, the illustration of the radio was used. It was said that it was a very different thing to hear a fine band on the radio, and to listen to the band itself. It was likened to the difference between being here in the Convention, on the one hand, and, on the other, to being able only to read about Theosophy and the Society in the QUARTERLY. I think that we must all have felt the truth of this; and have felt our sympathies go out to those isolated members who could not be here to-day, and whose theosophic companionship must be found through their reading. But unless I am mistaken, the one who used that illustration was led to come here because of reading the QUARTERLY, so what was said is further proof of the

causal power of consciousness and of understanding. Therefore I find myself believing that people, even when they meet together, could do much worse than spend an evening reading that magazine. And if I could urge something upon you, as a practical means of carrying out what I am striving to emphasize, perhaps I could think of nothing better than to ask you to read and re-read, alone and with your friends, the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

But to come back to the illustration of the radio, it furnishes a rather perfect illustration, as illustrations go, of one way in which we can serve, one function which the Theosophical Movement does serve for the whole world, and which in some measure we can participate in. Let us think what the radio receiver is. It is a very simple thing, a little thing. Its primary function is to record in material movements which we can sense, forces acting in the ether, and this function is performed by no more complicated an instrument than a slender filament, surrounded by a highly rarified atmosphere, and made to glow at white heat by a current passing through it. The filament becomes radiant, and its radiations, through the rarified atmosphere, are responsive to the vibrations in the ether,—vibrations so much finer than our gross matter that we can neither see nor hear nor touch them, but which are thus registered in radiations that, by means of a secondary electric circuit properly attuned, can be made to affect a telephone receiver. The instrument is tuned by altering the induction of the circuit, its magnetic properties, and its resistance; and by these means it is made responsive to one rate of vibration and irresponsive to others. Its irresponsiveness to other vibrations is what makes it possible for it to record vibrations of the kind to which it is attuned.

So, it seems to me, it is with us. All about us in the inner world, in the finer atmosphere that surrounds us, there are vibrations too fine for our senses to respond to them, but to which our inner natures may respond, and then record in our own lives. It is all a question of how we attune our lives. In the psychic ether which surrounds us, there is good and evil alike. There are the remains, the rotting remains, of all the cheap and vulgar thoughts of the world. There is, no less clearly vibrating, the divine power and blessing of the great Lodge of Masters. We may listen to what we choose, attune ourselves to what we will. But to answer to the one, we must be irresponsive to the other. We can not be responsive to both—for then nothing results but interference and confusion, a jumbled medley of unintelligible records. If we will listen, if we will rarify the atmosphere of our minds and hearts, and attune ourselves by self-induction proportionate to the resistance we encounter, if we will kindle aspiration until our hearts glow to white heat—not merely dull red—we can keep alive in the world an understanding of the Lodge, an understanding and a clear consciousness, acting as the receiver of the radio acts. The effect of this may be far greater than we realize. To do the will of the Lodge in our own lives, records that will in the life of mankind. It is not the receiver of the radio which puts out to sea in answer to the call of distress from some distant ship. But it is through the fidelity of the receiver's response that the call is heard. Once heard, it may be transmitted in a thousand hidden, automatic ways—by underground cable or over-ground wire, through the newspapers, by letter, by telegram, how one will—to where help may be available. But the message is lost if there be nothing attuned to it.

Can we not see that consciousness is fundamental? Can we not look into the world and see that all these questions which perplex us, perplex us in our personal lives, our business, our government, are all questions of consciousness, and of self-consciousness? Can we not see how self-consciousness has arisen in classes claiming to represent the whole, even as when, in our own natures, some elemental desire or appetite arises and claims our self-identification, saying *I* am hungry, *I* am ambitious, *I* want wealth. Are these things truly the "I" with which we would identify ourselves? Do we not see the same thing in the world about us,—some section, some segment of a nation, rising up and striving to gain the self-consciousness, the self-identification of the whole? Have we not seen that happen completely, from the dregs, in Russia? Can we not observe it happening everywhere? And is it not exactly the same appeal that is made to us as we live in the world,—that we should take for our own, that we should regard as ours, these changing voices of the world; that we should take its ideals as our ideals; that we should take its ambitions as our ambitions; its movements as our movements; and not only attune ourselves to them, so that it is to them that we respond in con-

sciousness, but so wholly lose ourselves in them that we shall become them in our thought of ourselves? As was said this morning, if we do so, we become that which is destined only to live to manure the ground, only to decay, and be ploughed under to enrich the soil for something more wholesome, more vital, more responsive to the processes of life instead of death.

Therefore we should carry from this Convention a resolution to find out more of the world in which we live, to gain a clearer understanding of our own minds and natures,—realizing that consciousness is causal and that there is nothing of more moment to us than that we should seek to understand the truths and principles which this Convention has brought to our minds and to our hearts.

MR. MITCHELL: I should like to move that the Committee on Resolutions be discharged with the thanks of the Convention, and I should particularly like to express the thanks of the Convention to the officers of the Convention. I should also still more like to express my own thanks and the thanks of everyone here to those who have worked on the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY during the past year, and for all that it has brought to all of us.

THE CHAIRMAN: A vote of thanks for the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is something we must all wish to second. Perhaps those who have worked on it, best know how much is owed to it,—how much they themselves owe to it, and to the remembered insistence of its founder that they should give their best to it, since it is only by giving one's best that one gains one's best. For my own part, therefore, I welcome the motion, not only as a means of expressing our thanks to its present writers, and proofreaders, and addressers of envelopes, but also as a symbol of our enduring gratitude to its founder—Mr. Griscom.

After certain announcements were made,—upon motion, the Convention was adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.

JULIA CHICKERING,
Assistant Secretary of Convention.

LETTERS OF GREETING

OSLO, NORWAY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:

As we are now at the end of the first Quarter of the new century, it seems appropriate to examine retrospectively our activity in the past twenty-five years, in order to find out the nature of the actuating principles of our Bra ch work, and individual work as well. What have we tried to accomplish,—and how have we accomplished it? Have we had our hearts and minds centred in that part of our complex nature which stands nearest to the nature of the Masters? Have we used our imagination to keep a clear-cut picture of our Master steadily in our mind? To what extent have we done our routine work as duties given us by the Masters? Have we kept our hearts open to the mighty efflux of the Masters' love, and let it flow out abundantly to our fellow-men? Have we tried to live as immortal souls instead of as mortal personalities filled with fear, anxiety and many human weaknesses?

Questions of a similar nature have, no doubt, occupied the thoughts of many other members at this present time. If this be the case it is, indeed, a joyful sign of unity of purpose and aspiration among the members of The Theosophical Society, which will inspire us with increased power and devotion in our future work.

May the deliberations of the Convention strike the key-note for our activity in the next twenty-five years of this century, thus giving the Branches and the individual members a true foundation-stone upon which we, being ourselves "as living stones," can build up a spiritual house for the Lord.

Fraternally yours,
THS. KNOFF,
Chairman, Oslo Branch, Norway.

ARVIKA, SWEDEN.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The Theosophical Society in Sweden sends to all members its cordial greetings and good wishes. May we all—by increasing unity of heart, obedience, observance and use of our opportunities to take the next step—endeavour to become more and more useful co-workers in the great Movement.

Fraternally yours,
HJALMAR JULIN.

AUSSIG-SCHRECKENSTEIN III, CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Although the last Convention was the inauguration of the new cycle of giving, so will nevertheless the present Convention have its special signification, because the Society passes now its fiftieth year. The process of disintegration proceeds, and parallel therewith the separation of the wheat from the chaff, the jewel from the rubbish, or the enduring from the ephemeral. The Masters care for the gathering of the former, and we, as members of The Theosophical Society which is the spiritual organ of humanity, hold our attention on the same aim: to let the spiritual man grow up in us, to intensify its activity and to provide the Masters with bricks for the future civilization, by our own efforts at reconstruction and transfiguration. The germ for that future civilization is deposited already, the impulse to the evolution of that new life is given. We need only to be aware of the different phases of such an evolution, to gain a feeling of composure, a sense of trust, and a dynamic hope as to its issue. The elements of mammon and the tendencies of the mob are doomed, from the beginning, to destruction or starvation; their life is only an ephemeral one, even though they behave themselves as if they were the imperator of humanity, and however much they may be inebriated by their illusive triumph. Once more we confess that we are very happy to have the inestimable and priceless privilege to be members of The Theosophical Society and our longing goes thither to earn the right of access to those inner bodies that are behind it. Therefore we are praying that we may have the power to sacrifice ourselves and to give all that we have to give, and that, without any reserve and with joyful willingness.

The members of the Aussig Branch send you their hearty greetings and fraternal good wishes for a magnificent and successful Convention. We hope to share, in a certain degree, the high and broadened consciousness of the Convention, and to partake of its real and splendid blessings.

Yours fraternally and faithfully,
OTHMAR KÖHLER.
Secretary, Aussig Branch.

The Aussig Branch also sent a long and most interesting Report to the Secretary of the Society.

OCUMARE DEL FUY, VENEZUELA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York: Dear Fellow-Members, Greeting! You are meeting at this moment because that is required by the great problems concerning the higher destiny of humanity. We hold once more our adhesion to the principles involved, and keep those hours—during the Convention meeting—consecrated to spiritual thinking and reading, in order to send to you our effort, and that our communion in spirit may be true at this hour.

Please to accept our sincere congratulations, and let the Masters send their blessing, to descend upon your hearts.

Fraternally yours,
ACISCLO VALEDON,
For the "Altagracia de Orituco" Branch.

SANFERNANDO DE APURE, VENEZUELA.

To the members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled: The "Jehoshua" Branch is with you in thought and heart. May the Masters' blessing descend upon you, and give to each one of us a steady determination to keep the link unbroken. Fifty years of sacrifice, means fifty years of continual blessings upon us from the Masters' hearts. We have received so much from them that with the greatest humility we remain thoughtful.

May we all become more deserving of the great love and peace which is Masters', and ever try to become their disciples, working disinterestedly for humanity with everlasting love.

Faithfully yours,

D. SALAS BAÏZ,
President.

CARACAS, VENEZUELA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The Venezuela Branch sends you its fraternal greetings and ardent wishes that this Convention, like each of its predecessors, may intensify the clarion call of the Lodge of which it is an expression, and widen the radius of its vibration.

Another year in the life of our Branch has elapsed. But not a year as measured by astronomical calculations, since it has been over-full of intense experience and work and seed-sowing—so far as it is possible—in the higher planes where time is not master. We have endeavored "to seek the Kingdom of God and His Justice," while knowing also that inevitably our own contributions must be sanctified, since the law is that all exists for the purposes of the soul.

This act of sowing the things of this world in the silent furrow of acceptation, of watering with patience, in the sure hope of the day of resurrection in spiritual fruition, has been perhaps most deeply felt by the Soul of our Branch. Among the seeds of promise which we have cast into the furrow fell that of Juan José Benzo, the unforgettable founder of the Theosophical Movement in Venezuela; and shortly after, that of his faithful wife. But now that they are already in the furrow we do not occupy ourselves with the *forms*, but think only of the perfection of the harvest that is to be. And now for the harvest.

Perhaps the most outstanding note of the year has been an awakening of the members of the Branch to a consciousness of their appointed task in the discharge of their personal duty, not only for results within the area of their own personalities, but for the transcendent consequences which it signifies for the world in general,—since each member of the T. S. shall be a central transmitting station, called to broadcast the music of the soul to all those who constitute the receiving apparatus.

The members of the Branch have begun to understand how the whole of life is a religion, and the ceremonies, its profession; how we are able to make of all individual acts a ceremony prescribed by the liturgy of the soul, celebrating them from one dawn to another incessantly, since we are all the temple of the Holy Ghost, where shines the light which accompanies every man that comes into the world.

Thus has the Branch grown logically in the acceptation of the responsibility of its mission and in gratitude to the Lords of Karma who have assigned us a post where there is so much work to do. And the Branch has always believed that They have commissioned it with an international work to be done; and having to respond, so far as is in its power, to this noble mission, it has resolved to issue again our review, in larger form and with the title *El Teosófo*. This will follow the same plan and direction of its elder brother The QUARTERLY, but adapted to the necessities of the Latin method. In selecting this title we did so, among other reasons, with the deliberate purpose of recovering a name which belongs to the T. S. and to make amends for the offence done to H. P. B. in the profanation of *The Theosophist*, the first magazine which she founded. Thus, at the turn of the fifty years we begin anew, on higher planes, as also freer from hindrances, to give another impulse to the same work, strengthened by the painful

experiences acquired in this interval: the body full of scars, but the soul faithful and with stronger wings. This new breath of life which blows over our Society is the counterpart of the hurricane of death which at this time is sweeping away those who were unfaithful to the immutable principles of the eternal Theosophical Movement, and who, although working for that which is diametrically opposed to the principles for which the T. S. works, appropriate to themselves this sacrosanct name, because it thus suits those of the black plane, since nothing more closely resembles the real diamond than the false diamond. There is nothing new in history; every spiritual action has always been followed by an opposite reaction, and vice versa; thus the disintegration of the "second death" in the unfaithful, means equally a reintegration of the "second birth" in the faithful. In this way we hope to contribute with our humble contingent, by co-operation in the work of redemption which the Masters will confide to the T. S., constituting it the "Spiritual Organ of Humanity."

Another part of our work has been the continuation of the translation of our books into Spanish, and their publication. This year an edition of *Letters that Have Helped Me, Vol. II*, has seen the light.

As to our meetings, these are full of life and interest. For many of us the approach of Saturday is a cause of joyful anticipation. In this *milieu* there breathes an atmosphere in which one feels more deeply, one sees more clearly, the mind is more alert and the soul gathers more courage; we meet each other in an interior world, and indubitably before the *presence* promised by the Master to two or more gathered together in His name. We do not take into account our small number, but our mission for the help of we know not what great world to-morrow, expressive of the will of the Lodge.

That this blessed Will may make itself more expressive still on the occasion of this solemn Pentecost, descending in tongues of divine fire, it is the desire of the Venezuela Branch, on the day of the Convention, to follow our custom and to meet here at the same time that you do in New York, thus making visible that which we already are—one body and one soul.

A. González Jiménez,
Acting Corresponding Secretary.

Whitley Bay, England.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The members of the Whitley Bay Branch send fraternal greetings. We realize the importance of the Convention as marking the end of a definite period, namely the quarter cycle of the century. As H. P. B. foretold, the mould of materialism has been completely broken down during this period, by the very science upon which it was built. It may therefore be said that at this time, we have, as a race, thrown off part of the outer husk of ignorance, and are passing out of "the Winter of our discontent" and ignorance, into the Spring of the cycle. Upon the effort put forward by us as members of The Theosophical Society, during this spring-time, will depend the beauty and fragrance of the growth in the summer, and the fulness of the harvest in the autumn.

Let us therefore bend to the task and sow as we wish to reap, by radiating forth that spiritual consciousness with which we are all endowed, and by which we are all sustained. We join with all members, so that the new life which the spring-time ushers in, may have the strength and unity of purpose towards that definite growth for which the Society was founded.

Fraternally yours,
Frederick A. Ross,
President.

GATESHEAD, CO. DURHAM, ENGLAND.

Dear Secretary, By the time this letter reaches you, the Convention will be very near. The members of the Judge Lodge in Gateshead send greetings, and best wishes for the success of the Convention. Our highest thoughts will be with all assembled.

Yours fraternally,
PERCY W. WARD,
Secretary.

SOUTH SHIELDS, ENGLAND.

The members of Krishna Branch, South Shields, England, send their sincere good wishes for the success of the Convention. Our hearts will be with all assembled on Convention day.

Fraternally yours,
WILLIAM E. DAGLISH,
Secretary.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: It is with feelings of love and devotion that we send you our heartiest greetings and best wishes; we realize, to some extent, the value of love and loyalty in a great Cause, and also that of understanding. We are therefore deeply grateful for the privileges and opportunities that have been ours in the past, of participating in this Work, and assure you of our continued co-operation and effort; effort more effectively to embody the principles for which we stand, and thus to become greater living witnesses to the Truth. We trust that your deliberations may be a tower of strength and light to us all, a keynote for the greater conquest of the souls of men. And those souls can well be ourselves; we do not need to go outside to bring people in, as it were; that is not our method or work. As we ourselves "become," we shall then truly draw others.

On behalf of the members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch,

Yours fraternally,
E. HOWARD LINCOLN,
President.

AYLSHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

To the Secretary T. S.: Our work consists mainly in correspondence, as our members live far apart, and some of us have never met. During the year we have continued, and completed, the study of *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras*, Mr. Johnston's translation; each of us writing notes of our thoughts on each month's study. These are circulated, month by month, among the members.

We are glad to take this opportunity of thanking the New York Branch for so kindly sending us reports of their fortnightly meetings, which we find most interesting. We are grateful for the privilege of thus being brought into touch with our fellow-members in America. We send you all our best wishes for a very good and happy Convention.

Yours sincerely,
ALICE GRAVES,
[*Secretary, Norfolk Branch.*]

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

To The Theosophical Convention, New York: Dear Brother Members in Convention assembled,—greeting. Once again the Annual Cog in the Mill of the Gods rolls by! May your deliberations make their indelible imprint on the spiritual sands of Time,—is the sincere wish of all the Cincinnati members.

Fraternally yours,
GUY MANNING,
President.

MIDDLETOWN, OHIO.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The members of Middletown Branch T. S. unanimously send their greetings and best wishes to you all. As each Theosophical Convention is a work of the Lodge of Masters, we know they will guide and assist you in making this Convention a great success as all others have been before. We hope that all who are able to attend will realize the splendid opportunity which they have to work for future humanity. May it evoke some soul-stirring message to all members generally, and to the world at large.

Middletown Branch as a whole, is with you in spirit.

Yours very sincerely,
W. G. ROBERTS,
Secretary, Middletown Branch.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

To The Officers and Members of The Theosophical Society, In Annual Convention Assembled: The members of the Pacific Branch of The Theosophical Society convey to you a most sincere greeting, with the pleasure of realizing that another auspicious milestone has been reached on the onward and upward Path of faithful workers in the Cause of the Masters. In commemoration of this event please accept the gift of a sweet scented flower dripping with dew, whose odour is of the breath of heaven, as a reminder of the Masters' constant presence, and with the prayer that it may come to bloom in the hearts of all who are seeking the Way.

Jacob Boehme, the Christian Mystic of the fifteenth century, quoting the saying of a Master, "Seek and ye shall find," points out, "*If you do not understand this*, seek the humble lowly heart of God, and that will bring you a small seed from the tree of Paradise into your soul, and if you abide in patience, then a great tree will grow out of the seed. Seek for the noble pearl of wisdom which is more precious than the whole world, and it will never depart from you. Where the pearl is there will be your heart also; you need not in this life seek any further after paradise, joy, and heavenly delight; seek but the pearl, and when you find that, then you find paradise and the kingdom of heaven."

In *Fragments*, by Cavé, we find a similar presentation when we read: "Folded in the heart of man the mystery lies—the mystery of life and immortality. Seek there the Path, oh, disciple, and thus the inner life is found. Is it that the eyes are blinded by material life, and the ears still deafened by clamour, so that things of spirit are sensed from afar, and mingled with the tumult of the senses nearer by?"

This has been the teaching given in all ages by the "Sons of Wisdom,"—to seek out the way from within, for the unveiling of the mystery of the noumenal life, and identification with that Power that makes both the noumenal and phenomenal life possible. Half truths with which humanity has been surfeited for centuries have placed the hoped-for paradise without and beyond mankind, and made it so vague, indefinite, and seemingly impossible of realization, that doubt became a halting belief, which grew apace into unbelief; and the soul more securely locked within its incasement, fettered as a bird ensnared, unable to free itself, wearied by beating its wings against its prison walls, droops and passes out; while its captor, in the freedom of his fancied emancipation, plunges blindly into the psychic maelstrom, confident that nought else is to be known or obtained than the keen sensational life of materiality; and in time he also droops and passes out, and thus the pity of it is he never knew that the jewel lay hidden in his heart, nor that the soul, having withdrawn from the multitude, and abiding in the silence of itself, solitary and alone, is in need of nothing external.

Sincerely and fraternally,
ALFRED L. LEONARD,
Secretary, Pacific Branch.

TORONTO, CANADA.

To The Secretary T. S.: During the present year we have been studying the *Ocean of Theosophy*, as some of our members are new to Theosophy. I think that the chief lesson some of us have learned, during the past year, as regards the Society and its work, is that more people than before are willing to listen and to learn; the feeling of people, in general, towards Theosophy is changed much for the better.

Fraternally yours,
A. J. HARRIS.

DENVER, COLORADO.

To the Secretary T. S.: The Virya Branch sends its greetings to the Convention. We have met regularly during the winter, and have used the QUARTERLY for the basis of our study and reading, especially the current numbers and those issued in 1910. We have also taken up several of the current popular movements, religious, social, and charitable, and have analyzed them theosophically, to try and distinguish just where they were working for righteousness, and where they fell short or were harmful: The Youth Movement; The Young Women's and Young Men's Christian Association, and several religious sects have been so considered. The interest of those present has seemed steady and vital.

Sincerely yours,
ANNE EVANS,
President, Virya Branch.

The following letter was received from members of the Society in France:—

My husband and myself wish to send you a few lines, to tell you that our thoughts are with you all at the Convention, and how sincerely we regret not to be there in person.

We are very young members of The Theosophical Society, but the fact of being members means a great deal in our lives.

Our one regret is to be so far away, and our desire to see a branch established in France is very strong.

I have confidence that our prayers will be answered and our desire gratified in the near future.

With our warmest greetings and best wishes for the Convention.

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: In this year also we send our hearty greetings and best wishes for a successful Convention; still as isolated members. We could not find other like-minded persons for joint study. In the past year particularly, we have felt the difficulties of isolated members and have been trying to see our opportunities. Often we were sad, because of our many failures and the opportunities we had lost. But we will continue the effort, to carry our ideals into life and not to be discouraged.

It was always a joy and help to us, to have correspondence with members in Czechoslovakia and from them to know the Branch study-themes and to receive reports of their meetings and several translations for study. Therefore we could often study the same article at the same time, and write our notes on our study, sending questions to other comrades. We unite our wishes for great progress in the new cycle of the Society's activity with those from the members of the Branch Aussig and all others.

Fraternally yours,
FRANZ WILLKOMM.
MARIE WILLKOMM.

BERLIN-WILMERSDORF, GERMANY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: We ask you on behalf of our Wilmersdorfer Circle to accept our heartiest greetings and sincerest wishes for a successful Convention.

Our circle looks back upon a year of quiet work. We held gatherings twice a week in which topics of the most diverse variety were treated upon and discussed, practically all of them covering the principles which embody the ideal of Brotherhood, the precise and defined comprehension of which is imperative for the beneficent efficacy of theosophic work. Our attitude towards these principles—especially as regards its significance as to War and Peace—as well as our duty for reparation, has been a barrier to the growth of our circle as far as guests and new members are concerned. The united recognition of these principles, together with the pursued observance of these principles, brought our circle more closely toge her, and fired our hearts to greater effort to lay them bare to the influx of pure spiritual life. For we realize that only thus can we best serve the Theosophical Movement and the spiritual renaissance of the German people.

Having used QUARTERLY articles only as a basis for our studies in the past year, and being convinced that great riches have been bestowed upon us through these articles which were, and always are, full of light and life, we conceive that we are greatly indebted to all contributors to the QUARTERLY as well as to those older members who have, otherwise, given us most valuable help; we have, therefore, no hesitation in expressing right here how thankful we are.

May the good forces of life enable us to follow the light—which so clearly indicates the Way before us—with secure step. With this desire we shall congregate at the festive hour, and be with you in heart and soul.

Fraternally yours,
OSKAR STOLL,
ALFRED FRIEDEWALD.

SCHRECKENSTEIN II, NEAR AUSSIG-ELBE.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: My fraternal and heartiest greetings. The Master says, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." He who seeks with zeal will find the gate which leads to the real home of souls,—The Theosophical Society.

The Convention of this year, 1925, is a holiday and a memorial day. At first, therefore, honour to the remembrance of the heroic Madame Blavatsky and the heroic W. Q. Judge! They widened and dug the channels deeper by devoted and self-denying pioneer work—those channels into which the waters of the spiritual life could flow in order to refresh all thirsty souls.

Also it was granted to me to taste of this delicious water. From this time it is my fervent desire to perform little services, and it is for me a consolation to know, if I have no flowers of virtue to offer to the Master, I may offer him my sins and failings which He is able to transform. I feel the significance of this Convention deep in my heart, and I have the ardent desire to be united with all members assembled at this Convention.

Faithfully and thankfully yours,
HELENE ZERNDT.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: We send hearty greetings, and our best wishes for the efforts afforded now for the coming year, to promote the Theosophical Movement. We shall be together also at the time of the beginning of the Convention, and combine with you as well as possible. We feel ourselves highly indebted, during the last year, because of the articles in The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, which were, we are hoping, a great help to us all.

We are seven members-at-large now; the meetings were held in the same outer circumstances as formerly. At several times we had invited guests, who were interested and had the wish to know better the subject of our study. The conditions of life with us are of a most pressing character, such as in all our lifetimes we have not yet had to stand. We believe, therefore, that the opportunities of the members are great and must be used as best can be done. The materialism practised by the large trusts and other organizations, must be overcome by the higher evolution of the spiritual nature in the souls of men. As "Charity begins at home," it is the general opinion of the members that all should obey the behests of the Great Law to the best of their power, as Christ has bidden us, and that purification of mind and heart must precede the understanding of the doctrine. The *Sutras of Patanjali*, in the translation of Mr. Johnston, we have considered as the manual according to which Yoga is to be apprehended and experienced; often it is quoted for the elucidation of things from other fields. The German translation of this work is in the hands of all here.

We have the wish to work with you for the coming year as your comrades, and hope to do service for the Cause of the Masters.

With kind regards,
Sincerely yours,
O. Ihrke.

Berlin, Schöneberg, Germany.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society Assembled in Convention in New York: To all members of the T. S. assembled in Convention, we send our most sincere sympathy and greetings. Gratefully we think of the Founders and all those who, through unwearying and selfless work have assured the existence of The Theosophical Society. May the time not be distant, when a great part of mankind may turn to the Theosophical life.

Otto and Ida Scheerer,
Otto and Luise Bethge.

Trieste, Italy.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Dear Fellow-Members: The undersigned send this year again the kindest regards to all fellow-members of the T. S. in Convention assembled. Now we are already four persons who meet regularly in the Masters' name under the Flag of the T. S. of N. Y.,—a little sentinel in a big Country, like the grain of mustard-seed in the Parable.

May your helpful thoughts be of support to our Will and Work!

Fraternally yours,
Albert Plisnier,
Teresa Plisnier,
Vincenzo Todini,
Jenny Mussafia.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE NEW YORK BRANCH OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY ON THE EVENING OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION

Mr. Perkins (*Chairman*): During this season, we have been discussing the three worlds in which we live every day—the world of the higher nature, the world of the lower nature, and the intermediate world of double reflection. I hope that all of us this evening will be able to connect that general topic with the real topic of the Convention to-day. Perhaps one connecting link is the reminder which Mr. Hargrove gave us of what was said in Convention

three years ago, when we were told that The Theosophical Society must serve as an ark to preserve certain sacred things from the psychic flood which was even then sweeping over the world,—to preserve the ancient wisdom, to preserve seeds of the nobility of the past. To that end, we were told that the Society must produce within itself the nucleus of a practical discipleship.

To-day with all the light of Convention about us, with the united heart of the assembly here, with the power that has come down to us, through the hierarchy, from the great Lodge of Masters above us,—in this particular moment we do not feel the sweep of the world's psychic flood, because we have been lifted above it. But there is very real peril for every one of us, in that flood, as well as peril to that which we hold most dear. Why? On account of its power of glamour.

I wish, for a moment, that we might look at the a-b-c's of glamour. The psychic flood has a power of glamour because, first, it is made of psychic stuff, which is fascinating, enchanting, alluring stuff, every atom of it glistening with reflected light; second, the forces within it are psychic forces, very powerful on their own plane, but, unfortunately, they do not label themselves as psychic. They are real forces,—the dynamic forces of light and motion and beauty from above. They bring also the magnetic, the attracting quality that is so characteristic of the real world.

If, then, the psychic forces come from the real world, giving life and attraction to the matter of the psychic world, where does the evil and the glamour come from? Like all evil, it comes from man's lower nature,—from the mean, selfish, abominable thoughts and acts which we indulge. If I think a mean, suspicious thought about one of my friends, instantly that thought forms for itself a body out of the suspicion stuff of the psychic world, and some of my life goes into that wretched body, vitalizing it so that it starts prowling about, in my mind and in the minds of others, seeking something of detriment to my friend. But when that suspicious thought appears again and again on the mirror of my mind, does it appear as the cruel and loathsome thing which it is? No, far from it! It probably seems to me as if robed in divine justice. Why? Because that kind of thought and impulse belongs to the world of lower nature, and is reflected into the mind from below. Every thought reflected into the mind from below, has, in its very nature, the power of glamour, the faculty of illusion, the ability to seem quite different from what it really is. Every thought from below is an arrant fraud, and many of them are venomous.

All our thoughts are not from below; some are from above; but, good or evil in origin, they are reflected onto the surface of our minds, and we say, "I thought this," or "I thought that." We must remember that the mind is only an instrument for receiving impressions, recording them, comparing them, and tabulating them. It is a psychic instrument, which functions in that intermediate world of double reflection. In the same moment, it reflects to us images and impulses from beneath, intuitions and aspirations from above. Confusion results. Are we the innocent victims of mental confusion? We are not. Back of every mental confusion there is a moral confusion which came from violating the laws of life.

Is it only a member of The Theosophical Society who is subject to confusion and glamour? Take a look at the world about us; select any of the fine arts as an example, and we find the work hopelessly mixed with psychic illusion. Here and there, perhaps, a lone figure of a man working apart, so deeply in love with truth and its beauty that he has almost kept himself above the psychic swirl. In the learned professions, in the church, in the schools, do you not find almost hopeless confusion? Where, in public life, the world over, is there a leader who has kept his vision unclouded? In the business world, the currents of trade and finance are swirling with illusions of every kind. The confusion and glamour is world-wide.

Now we know perfectly well in our own experience what glamour is like. If you ever tried to reason with a man who was completely wrapped up in a glamour of any kind, you know what a hopeless task it was. You might just as well stop talking to him,—forget it,—do something else. He is impervious to reason. We know inside our own hearts what it is like, because, once in a while, some friend comes along and suddenly wakes us up and lifts us out of our glamour so that we see it as it really is.

Why does glamour get such a hold on us; what is it inside of us that responds to it? Of course it is the unregenerate, psychic stuff in us which responds. Nothing else could respond. Like answers back to like. We have all seen a child in the nursery playing with a horseshoe magnet. He tries it on a table made of wood, and nothing happens; then on a pewter cup, and nothing happens; then on an iron nail, and instantly something happens, because the attractive stuff in the magnet has met some stuff of its own kind. So the only way to be free and unblinded in the presence of glamour—and in this world at the present time it is always about us—the only way to be free and able to serve, is to get that psychic stuff in our natures transformed into a better grade of stuff.

Last night I am sure that there were a number of people working late over preparations for this Convention. I should not be surprised if someone were feeling sleepy. It would not be a bit strange, under these circumstances, if someone should begin to feel sorry for himself. Has he not tried his best? Did he not sit up late working when he really needed the sleep? We all know the symptoms of self-pity and its glamour, but what is it made of? Well, it feels to me like sour, fermenting, psychic stuff,—yes, of course there are ferments floating around in the air of the psychic world, just as there are bacteria and bad odours and things far more unpleasant. What does self-pity sound like, in the other fellow, when you are on the outside of it? Why, it sounds like a puny, sickly, little wail. But when you are on the inside of it, through the illusion of some magic loud-speaker, that little, sickly wail is transformed into grand-opera, with you as the hero right in the centre of the stage.

We were reminded that the way to the future for all that is really dear to us, is the way of The Theosophical Society, which is the ark of the future. The old story of the Ark is very familiar, but I must confess that I had never thought what it meant, until I wanted to talk about it to-night. Just think what a lot of hard work and rigid discipline there must have been. There are delightful pictures of the animals going in two-by-two, followed by Noah and his family two-by-two; then the pictures show them all coming out again without any change except that Noah's whiskers seem to have grown a little longer. However it may have been in the days of Noah, I believe that it will require every bit of determination and faithfulness and obedience that each one of us can summon to the task, if we are to remain in the Theosophical ark for the next five years, or even until one year from to-day. That transformation of the unregenerate, psychic stuff in our lower natures must be accomplished without any further delay, or, like will respond to like, and we shall find ourselves overboard, in that ghastly, psychic torrent.

I feel very strongly that the Convention to-day has given us fair warning. We have been told plainly that our leaders are moving forward. We have the chance, if we will, to follow. If we follow, we follow into a fight, and a part of that fight must come without delay right inside the individual heart of every one of us who follows. Any of us may fail, as individuals, but does that matter? Shall we let the Cause fail? Shall the men at the very bottom of that scaling ladder against the wall, which we were told about to-day,—shall the least of us, at the critical moment, let go and let those above us fall? I hope and pray and determine, not.

MR. WOODBRIDGE: Perhaps the only reason that I am asked to speak is to remind us of our connection with the Allies of the Great War. The Allied armies invented the liaison officers between the different nations on the lines. I am, in part, a visito · from Boston and yet, in part, still, thanks be, a New York member. I have proved that it is a most difficult thing for any person to make any progress, whatever his desires, without the aid, the sacrifice, and the companionship of his brothers in the T. S. I pity anyone who cannot establish some contact with his brothers in the work.

The latest story going through Boston is about a doctor who writes on psycho-analysis, psychiatry, psychonomics, and all such subjects. He told his intimate friend, Jones, with whom he plays pool, that the latter was to be the subject of a whole chapter in a forthcoming book, because for twenty years he had noticed that Jones invariably called "tails," when they tossed to decide the break. Jones was furious. He pointed out that he was not the

type of man who can only make one invariable choice. He mentioned a simpler explanation, which the Doctor had overlooked—which is not surprising to those in the T. S. who have noticed how modern science still sticks to the externals and avoids the plane of reason. Jones stutters. He stutteringly explained that he always said "tails," because he could say it and he literally could only breathe hard and make no sound when he tried to say "heads."

Is it not possible that, if we choose and endeavour, we may take from this Convention an ability to say "heads"? Perhaps we have been more or less saturated with glamour. It is very polite and courteous, the way the older members call it—"glamour." I would hate to use good, old English words to describe it. I may, at least, call it somewhat as it is—"highly odoriferous and foully corrupting self-conceit." The prevailing glamour of the day seems to me to be when a man turns around and worships in himself what he thinks is man, merely because he is not able to see the real man.

One of my sons brought home a schoolmate to accompany him to a school function. The visitor had not succeeded in tying his dinner jacket tie. He asked me to do it. I recalled that for a third of a century I had been tying a dinner jacket tie. I went blithely to the task. Facing him I failed repeatedly. Then I turned him around in front of a mirror; put my arms around his neck, and tied the tie at once! I had never tied a tie in the real world. I had always tied my ties in the world of reflection. I had been interested only in my own tie. I had never before gone out to help other people tie their ties. Therefore, I had grown to see dinner jacket ties only in inversion—turned around. We may, however, get out of that world of inversion—if we wish to live.

Ferment rules that world. Ferment is ceaselessly active. Think, however, what it ends in. Mother of vinegar working in a cider barrel is an unpleasant sight. If we get up above that world of inversion, we find coolness, strength, peace, and power. We may find on the true plane a vision of reality and no longer live in any sort of unpleasant dream. That vision seems to me to be expressed in the words used by all great religious teachers: "Follow me." I have yet to find one who says, "Go there." Much has been said here to-day of the menace to souls because of the world-wide tendency to do whatever others are doing—be it right or be it wrong—for the avowed reason to keep in step; to conform. Our lower nature is always whispering to us: "It is all a dream; I—I am it; worship me; conform; conform; conform." We may learn from Convention a lesson of true conformity. In one sense—if there be one thing we are called upon to do, it is to conform. The test is—with what are we going to conform? Are we going to be part of this contemptible, unreal ferment; this "fertiliser and manure" that we heard of this morning, or are we going to conform with the perennial? Which are we going to be? What are we going to conform with?

Here Theosophy comes to our aid, brought back to the world by the steady courage, the agonizing sacrifices, and the dashing bravery of Madame Blavatsky, as supported by men like Mr. Judge; carried on by General Ludlow and by Mrs. Keightley and by our own friend, Mr. Griscom, whose beloved name it is still hard even to mention here among his friends and appreciators—carried on to teach us the right and to give us vision of beauty and charm. That may be our greatest gift from to-day—the beauty and charm of all right conformity—the thing that sent forth knights errant of old—that great picture of the great fight, described as: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." We have been given a trustworthy picture of the fact that our humblest efforts and strivings are helping, each and all. We have been invigorated by the clearcut reminder that each one of us, however unworthy, is indeed part of the universe, and that upon each one of us rests a chance provided by God himself—somewhat, somehow to lift the load; to back up our leaders; to enter into the fight, wherever and however we may be placed in life. And so the beauty and charm that we may take from this Convention to lighten our days, are the beauty and charm that come from knighthood lived and tried in the humblest circumstances and in the most trivial of duties—and as we meet them in the spirit of Theosophy—however humble and unworthy we be—then and there indeed we are fighters in the great Cause of the Lords of Compassion.

DR. CLARK: Much was said this morning and this afternoon about the world, its low standards and its vulgarity, which, however, when overlaid with glamour, become perilously tempt-

ing; and as no question or protest was voiced about that repeated condemnation of the world, it might be inferred that all feel prepared to recognize glamour when it arises and to deal successfully with it. It may be hoped that we are immune to certain kinds of attack but, if so, glamour will inevitably assume new forms and fashions, so that, instead of counting ourselves secure, we should do well to consider incidents from the past where its activity, unmistakably clear, may warn us how alert we need constantly to be. Such an incident occurred about a hundred years ago, when the failure of Napoleon's Russian campaign (followed later by Waterloo), easing the blockade of England, and bringing to the English people the assurance of a plentiful food supply, ushered in a period of self-indulgence that has some points of resemblance with our contemporary epoch. That period of ample feeding gives the lie to a theory advanced by some agitators and ecclesiastics that well-fed men turn their attention whole-heartedly to religion, for England did not so. It wanted nothing so worth while as religion, but only some new literary flavours. [The speaker then illustrated his theme from the career of Lord Byron, referring to the long struggle between Byron's higher and lower nature, "with varying fortunes of war," the real man winning in him at last.]

Where so many older and wiser than Byron have fallen, what wonder that he should have been the victim of flattery and adulation, seeing that he was only a youth whose mind was stored with many distressing memories, and that he was entirely friendless? Our weak spots may not be the same as his, but as the world will surely discover ours and endeavour to break through them, we should accept with gratitude every warning to be on guard. Even that vulgar world, however, with its low, material aims, can render service, for turn where we will in its history, nation after nation confronts us with the tradition of a golden age when gods and divine beings walked on earth with men. Since the divisions of time are said to be an effect of glamour, perhaps we may be so bold as to transfer the golden age to the future, thinking of it not as a past achievement, but as a goal to which The Theosophical Society is blazing the pioneer's trail. We believe that The Theosophical Society was founded by divine beings, the Masters, our leaders,—that it is a "supernatural" society. To-day, we have been invited, such as we are, to follow those leaders. Is that invitation to *us* anything less than a miracle?

MR. MITCHELL: During the winter we have given a great deal of time to the study of the three natures of man—the lower, the middle and the higher—and to an aspect of this which was spoken of this afternoon: how to avoid being deceived by the glamour of the middle, psychic nature, and how to learn to distinguish the real from the reflection. I have been thinking over all that has been given us to-day, trying to recall what has been said and to impress it on my mind. Professor Mitchell, in opening, spoke of the effect produced in the world by the continuance of the Theosophical Movement within it, likening the effect of that flow of force to a mountain stream poured into a stagnant pool, bringing evil as well as good to the surface. The world war was one effect, perhaps made possible because the continuance of the Theosophical Movement made a division between good and evil, where, before, all had been inextricably mingled together. Others spoke of the need for reverence, the need to look up, and above all, the need to realize that we stand on the second of the four walls of the city, within which the Heart of the World is held prisoner, looking down into the dark streets filled with enemies, into which our leaders are advancing, and into which it is our duty, our privilege and our happiness to follow. Professor Mitchell, in closing, spoke of all growth as a matter of consciousness, and to-night reference has been made to what was said two years ago of the Ark of the Theosophical Society. I have been thinking of that Ark, not so much as Noah's ark designed to weather safely the psychic flood, but rather as the Ark of the Covenant, and of the pearl beyond price that is within it, the wisdom of the ages, the ancient wisdom, preserved for us by the great ones of the Lodge. The happiness and the destiny of mankind are preserved in that Ark; the knowledge that man needs for his blessedness, the knowledge of his destiny, that he has a destiny, that life has a purpose and that it is not blind or mechanical. Fifty years ago, when the Society was founded, the world was just beginning to realize the supremacy of law, and in that fifty years the realization has been attained that all is under law, that the universe is one, and that it is a universe of law and of force.

Matter, as such, has been obliterated by science, which regards it as merely an aspect of force; but science has not yet taken the step that The Theosophical Society took years ago, and which, perhaps, if we do our duty and hold steadfast in the little things that are asked of us, the world may take in the next fifty years,—and that is to attain to the knowledge that it is not only a universe of law and force and power in the material sense, but that back of that force and power there is consciousness and purpose. That purpose is the development of the soul.

Why have we been studying all winter how to avoid being deceived by glamour? Why were we talking to-day of the need to ally ourselves with immortal things and to free ourselves from the lower,—from all that is destined only to die and to be plowed under? It is so that we may be able to go down from that second wall, down into the dark city streets below, and, fighting in that darkness, may not strike friends instead of foes. If we are immersed in glamour, how can we tell friend from enemy? Surely, freedom from glamour is one of the things the world needs most. I have often wondered if the armistice were not permitted by the Lodge because the world was so blind it did not know that it was not fighting for democracy, but for righteousness. Complete outer victory might have made the confusion worse. It seems to me that a part of what there is in the Ark of The Theosophical Society is the light that will enable man to tell the good from the evil, so that men can make their choice. When a man is put in a position where he can choose, when the light shows the good here and the evil there, whether he will or not, he must choose. If he be a man, he must fight.

Once more, thank Heaven, we have been permitted to get a glimpse of what there is in the Ark of Theosophy. Thank Heaven, we know there is *that* in the universe to which we can look up with all there is in us, to which we can give ourselves whole-heartedly; something that can satisfy the deepest longing of every man's soul. What higher happiness can one ask than to love absolutely a Being absolutely lovely, and to give oneself—with all that one is—to the fight for that which he reveres and worships with his whole heart and soul!

After the usual brief adjournment for the formulation of questions, the Chairman called upon Mr. Hargrove.

MR. HARGROVE: The following question appears to have been handed in: "What was meant by the statement this afternoon that Mr. Hargrove had 'slammed' youth?" That is a question intended to give me the opportunity to make my peace with youth! Youth is not necessarily synonymous with "years old." There are old men, seventy, eighty years old, who have not grown up and who never will. It does not follow that because anyone is young in years, he is condemned to youthfulness in that sense, and it is in that sense that youth is unnecessary. I trust I have now made my peace with youth!

And now for the question of glamour, which is not only of immense interest, but which we ought to do our utmost to understand, examining our own experience, both inner and outer, so as to find out all that we can, in regard to its nature and action. There can be no need to remark that it is often easier to see its effect upon other people than upon ourselves. Occasionally it is still easier to see it at work in the affairs of the world, on a large scale, and it is particularly easy, or should be, for most of us, to see the effect of glamour in connection with some of the events that followed the great war. We have already offended people—quite seriously, I am afraid—by certain remarks made from time to time about England; and I fear I may offend them again and still more: but it cannot be helped. If we speak at all, we must tell the truth as we see it, and others, who think differently, must do the same.

Many people have attributed all the ills that followed the war to the war itself, but I am not going to waste your time by dealing with so crude an illusion as that. Some people—much fewer in number—have been inclined to attribute those same ills to the armistice, and although there are perhaps none in this room who would be prepared to excuse or defend the armistice, it is at least conceivable that, in spite of the armistice, Germany might later have been conquered, if England and this country had done their duty to the end. Instead of doing so, they became victims of glamour, and failed for lack of right understanding and of

final perseverance,—England much more to blame than America, because England had less excuse for her delusion. When, as a matter of fact, the most trying part of the war had only begun, the armistice was mistaken for victory; people threw up their hats, deciding that now at last they could relax, rest, and devote their energies to making money. You will see at once, I hope, the possible analogy between the situation in the world then, with what would be the present situation in The Theosophical Society if we too were to become the victims of glamour,—if we too, like England and America at the time of the armistice, were to permit desire to dominate reason, and were to persuade ourselves that the war is over.

The German fleet had ceased to exist, and England therefore felt safe. No longer afraid, she relapsed into selfishness, becoming blind to the wider view, to principle, and to ultimate expediency. Practically from the time of the armistice, England ceased to co-operate with France, refusing to see that France was still in danger, that the peace of Europe was still threatened, and avowedly pursuing her own course for what she regarded as her own benefit. It was a calamity, due in large measure to England's lack of leadership. She had been the victim, for years, of mob rule, and the mob acts by instinct, which is sometimes right but more often wrong. There has been nothing more magnificent in the history of England than the way in which the mob behaved in 1914. It was superb,—the way that men of all classes instinctively did the right thing, instinctively gave themselves, body and soul, to the cause which they felt to be noble. They were not actuated then by self-interest. They were lifted above themselves. But, with the so-called peace, came reaction and the sense of accomplishment; and because sacrifice was no longer demanded in terms of death, but only in terms of life—in terms of moral courage and of four-o'clock-in-the-morning courage—the mob was not equal to the test. The level of its consciousness sank and continued to sink, until the desire—not necessarily in the forefront of the mind, and in most cases merely instinctive—until the desire to take care of self and to let England's former Allies look after themselves so far as that did not seem to threaten England's interests, became the only desire and the only course of action that the mob found tolerable.

It ought not to be necessary to say much about the reaction in the United States. All of us know that when the fighting was over there was a general sigh of relief. "The boys" were coming home. America had cut a great figure in the war; but the desire of this country was to get out of it as quickly and as completely as possible. She had made all the sacrifice that she wanted to make, and more. The consequence has been that the loans made by this country to her Allies during the war, have been held over the situation in Europe as a continual threat. England, for reasons of her own—and at that time, partly to bring pressure to bear on France—met the demands of America, and is in process of paying her debt. We know that the money loaned to France is being demanded, and that every possible pressure is being brought to bear to force France to repay. We forget—we choose to forget—that the money which the Allies borrowed from this country was spent here on arms and ammunition; we forget that our own Government got nearly 80% of it back into its own pockets by means of special taxation (not only taxes on direct profits, but taxes on wages and salaries, with taxes on other profits made through the production of raw materials). We forget a great deal. Self-seeking, selfishness, glamour—glamour so complete that this country is convinced it is right, just as England is convinced it is right. There is positive inability to listen to reason. Newspapers such as the "Spectator" in England, usually fairly sane, show themselves to be hopelessly lunatic under that head.

I speak of these things at the Convention meeting of the New York Branch, because the influence of the Convention reaches very much further than most of us can begin to realize; and what America has done and what England has done in that connection is a shame and a disgrace. We have left our Ally in the lurch, doing magnificently up to a certain point, and then turning our backs on the situation, permitting our desire to convince us that the work was finished, that the war was over, when in truth we were just at the beginning of the war,—because, while Germany on the physical plane had been conquered, in her own estimation and on the plane of will, Germany had not been conquered: should have been, might have been, but was not, merely for lack of final determination, for lack of understanding. And that

lack of understanding was due to glamour, to glamour thrown up by a misguided sense of self-interest and by the self-complacent thought that we had "won through."

Our immediate concern is this: The Theosophical Society, as was stated this morning, has won through to the fiftieth year of its existence. So far, the fighting has been more or less objective, making an almost visible appeal to courage, endurance, sacrifice. But the war is not over. The real test is beginning,—the test of moral courage, of clear vision, is upon us. The fight must be carried on in terms of will and of understanding, and of fidelity to right principle. Pray heaven that none of us do as England did, as America did. That indeed would be a calamity. Surely we should learn from so great an object lesson! Each one of us can see for himself what happened and why. Then, having learned all that we can learn from "the life that surrounds" us; having striven "to look intelligently into the hearts of men"—"from an absolutely impersonal point of view, otherwise your sight is coloured"—let us turn the lesson upon self, and see how that lesson applies. I do not see, in view of all that has been given us, that we can have any excuse if we fail—fail in understanding, or fail in determination to push forward to the end.

MR. ARMSTRONG: The words of the famous anthem express my feeling better than any words of my own:

"Great is Jehovah the Lord,
For Heaven and Earth testify to His great pow'r.
'Tis heard in the fierce raging storm,
In the torrents' loud thundering roar;
Great is Jehovah the Lord
Mighty is His pow'r.
'Tis heard in the rustling of leaves in the forest,
Seen in the waving of golden fields,
In loveliest flowers' gaudy array,
'Tis seen in myriad stars that stud the heavens,
Fierce it sounds in the thunder's loud roll,
And flames in the brightly quivering flash.
Yet clearer thy throbbing heart
To thee proclaims Jehovah's pow'r,
The Lord God Almighty!
Look thou praying to Heav'n,
And hope for grace and for mercy
Great is Jehovah the Lord!"

MR. AUCHINCLOSS: I had the greatest difficulty in realizing all this week that Convention time had come again and that the active work of another year was almost over. It hardly seems a year since the last Convention. But it is, and all this week the members of the New York Branch, with the regularity of a fixed habit, have been making preparations to receive the Delegates.

Thinking in these terms about the Convention, I thought of the extent to which we are all creatures of habit. And I was reminded of the old horse which had spent all his life out in the country going round and round in a treadmill of some kind, a cider press or a sawmill, pushing a heavy wooden bar. He had grown old and feeble and superannuated, and had been turned out to pasture. But he could not get away from the fixed habits of a lifetime. All day long he went round and round in the pasture in a circle. He would stop when the noon whistle blew, and go off and lie down under a tree for a while. But when one o'clock came he was up and at it again, going round and round in the same circle.

Some of us are like that old horse. There are two ways of looking at it. Either we have fixed habits of thought and moulds of feeling that hold us back, and block off the light, and prevent our progress, so that we never really get away from these things, except when some-

thing happens that corresponds to the blowing of the noon whistle, such as the coming of Convention, when for a time we are raised up out of ourselves,—although even then, when the noon hour is over, we are quite likely to drop back again into the old mental and emotional habits and moulds; or else our habits of thought and feeling are entirely different, and there is real aspiration and effort and progress. In that case, when the noon whistle blows and Convention comes, it is a time of tremendous and permanent inspiration, from which we go back to take things up where we left them off, with the resolve to do them better than we have ever done them before. We go back full of dissatisfaction with the whole quality of our effort; full of a wonder that we have ever been able to feel any measure of self-gratulation; full of a feeling of impatience with ourselves that we have not done long ago what little we have been able to accomplish, and done it infinitely better.

New aspiration, new humility, new zeal, new inspiration, as a result of Convention! Creatures of habit, perhaps; but constantly trying to raise the quality and the level of our habit. Seeking the Way; seeking it by retreating within; but not forgetting to seek it by advancing boldly without.

Mr. LaDow: As I was coming here this evening, I thought of a Chinese proverb which I believe many of us might well take to heart, in the light of all that has happened to-day. "To be full without overflowing is to possess wisdom." "Overflowing" suggests that which overflows,—water, which is one of the very ancient symbols of glamour, because, of course, when one looks at an object through water it does not appear the same as when seen through the atmosphere. Mark Twain tells a story that illustrates this property of glamour, and indicates how impossible it is to trust any of our mental operations that fall under its dominion. He was speaking of a mountain lake in Colorado. The water was so clear that when one was in a boat in the middle of the lake—where it was two or three hundred feet deep—he could see a ten cent piece on the bottom. Some of his friends expressing doubt that this was possible, he said: "I am willing to compromise. I could at least see a ten dollar bill floating on the surface."

I think that all of us, in New York and elsewhere, should bear in mind the spiritual force, the creative power for good, that is present in a simple act of right understanding. Mention was made this afternoon of Alexander the Great, whose work illustrates what a single human being can do by utilizing the energies latent in consciousness. Alexander invented or rather re-adapted—because no one ever really invents anything—a method of colonizing which was the direct opposite of the method of armed conquest that had established the Persian Empire. When the Persians annexed a territory, they exacted tribute and left a few soldiers to preserve order. A palace revolution could ignite a spark that would consume the whole realm. Alexander's method was to establish groups of Greek colonists in the wake of the army. These colonists consolidated his conquests. Superior politically to the people among whom they settled, they gradually brought them to their own level and made them not only accept but welcome Greek civilization. And all this was accomplished by the spread of Greek consciousness. Just by being what they were, the Greeks reduced the "matter" around them to vibrations concordant with their own. Surely we may learn from such historical illustrations the way to realize the principle which underlies the work of The Theosophical Society; that The Theosophical Society is to be a nucleus of universal brotherhood. It is only through our consciousness, by *being* that which we profess to admire, that we can really disseminate a beneficent influence, that we can really create.

It has occurred to me that the concluding remarks of Professor Mitchell this afternoon, and his emphasis on understanding, have a direct relation to what we are now discussing. To be good, wise, and so forth, appears a long way off for many of us and rather hopeless. It may seem easier and more hopeful for some, to begin with the effort to gain a clearer understanding of what wisdom is, even if at first our understanding be only intellectual and abstract. To understand is a privilege open to all students of Theosophy, and we may cherish the idea that, if we understand, we cannot help *being* a little that which we understand, and that by *being* we cannot fail to influence the world.

Professor Mitchell: The following written question was handed to the Chairman, who

has passed it to me for reply: "Could more in detail be said on consciousness?" Answer: Yes! Mr. LaDow has just pointed out that understanding of the good seems within our reach; and surely if there be an understanding of the good within our reach, the love of the good is within our reach; and if there be a love of the good possible for us, there will of necessity be possible a conscious self-identification, at all events of our deepest self, with the good. Now that leads at once, it seems to me, to the importance of self-consciousness. And if I have anything more to say upon consciousness after that which I have already said, it is upon this side of it that I would wish to speak.

Take Mr. Perkins' illustration of the puling wail of self-pity magnified into grand opera. It depends upon our own concept of ourselves as to how that action looks to us. In one of those forthcoming books which will be purchasable to-morrow, and to which allusion was made this afternoon—in the *Letters to Friends*—I remember one passage which always appealed to me: the letter said the author had a recipe for happiness if we were willing to use it,—namely, cease to see ourselves as angels banished from heaven, and see ourselves as sinners saved from hell. The instant we pause to consider, we shall see how true and how far-reaching that is. It is our own picture of ourselves, of what are our deserts, our own concepts of our interests, of our identities, which colour all the universe about us. And if these be false, if our own vision of ourselves be false, then our whole vision of life is false, because, at least in one sense, all our consciousness of the external universe is a projection outwards of our consciousness of ourselves.

We may find in this principle the explanation of what Mr. Hargrove had to say of the different standards manifested at different times in the actions of England and this country with reference to the war. At the very beginning of the war, let us consider some American reading of the war, reading of it as so many read of it in 1914, in an aloof and detached way, as something with which they perhaps had very little concern. They were conscious of it, but not in the least self-conscious. As the issues of the war grew clearer, and were brought home to all, even the most aloof reader realized that there were in those issues things that pertained to him,—his ideals, his standards of righteousness, perhaps his material interest;—he began to be self-conscious of the war, seeing its reference to himself. And according to his own concept of himself, was, in all probability, his view and judgment of the war. If he were one whose self, to himself, lay in his financial interests, worldly activities and comfort, it would be easy to conceive his coming to a steadily deepening hope that Germany might soon win. If his interests were of another kind, in standards of international integrity and good faith, if he saw his moral values threatened, he would find himself more and more enlisted in the cause of the Allies. According to the point of view from which we look out on the world, is the vision that the world presents to us, and our reaction to it. My point might be restated as a plea, drawn from those facts of consciousness, that we should form a truer and deeper and higher concept of ourselves, that we should cease to believe ourselves cheap; that we should see, deep down in the essence of us, something that is true, vital, worthy, righteous; and that we should claim that as ourselves, taking it as our standpoint, our point of view, our centre of self-hood and self-reference,—that centre from which we look out on the world, to which we refer all of which we are conscious, our centre of self-consciousness, of self-identification. That centre of self-identification, in its deepest analysis, lies in what we love—not in what we *think* we love, but in what we do love; in what we live to serve, in the interest of which we live. So, if in truth we understand the purposes of the Theosophical Movement, if it be true that from them we can get an understanding vision of what is good, I hold that it is within our power to take the next step,—to love the good, and loving it, to make it the centre of our lives, of our self-consciousness, the point of view from which we look out on life, and so, the centre of our selfhood, the centre of our vision, the centre of our being.

REVIEWS

Fragments, Vol. III., by Cavé; published by the Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York; price, $1.00.

When the first volume of *Fragments* was published in 1908, the present reviewer wrote that "after reading it twice, very carefully, it seems that not less than a year of constant study would make a review worth while. It is the revelation by a soul of the Light it has found on the Path. My belief is that for hundreds of years it will be read devoutly and with love by those who seek that Path. . . . This book is a proclamation, loud enough for all who have will to hear, that the link has been kept alive and vibrant, and that on the ladder raised to heaven the angels of God are still ascending and descending, and that 'the Lord' still stands above it."

We are inclined to grow accustomed to things, and then to take them for granted. It is a deadening tendency, against which we should struggle by all the means in our power. We should count ourselves alive only in so far as all spiritual beauty fills us with an ever-new delight and wonder. Is that how the 'Fragments' impress us, as they appear in each issue of The QUARTERLY? Read the first thirty pages of the third volume, just published—a collection of the 'Fragments' since the second volume was issued—and see if they do not appeal to you as freshly drawn from a cool and immortal fountain, that the fever of life may be stilled, and that we may grasp ourselves anew for the one purpose for which the world exists.

There are many extracts from letters of a Guru to his chêla in this third volume,—sometimes so marked, but often left undesignated, to speak for themselves; or with comment by the recipient who, having striven to obey, is able to warn against misunderstanding and to drive home the sword-strokes of the spirit with the weight of personal experience. All of it is *history*,—the history (not otherwise to be written) of the hidden life of the theosophical movement: the history of a marvellous effort, of a great war, which chêlas in the Lodge have watched, breathlessly. It is not over, that war. What will be the response, the response of will and desire, to the appeal of this volume? E. T. H.

Letters to Friends, by John Gerard; published by the Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York; price, $1.75.

How few are the original contributions to theosophical literature which the movement has produced since 1875! There are the works of H. P. Blavatsky; the *Letters That Have Helped Me* and other writings of W. Q. Judge; *Light on the Path* and *Through the Gates of Gold;* the articles by various writers republished as *Five Years of Theosophy; Fragments* by Cavé; *The Song of Life* and other interpretations of Eastern scriptures by Charles Johnston; *Meditation* by H. B. Mitchell; the "Letters to Students" by Clement A. Griscom, now appearing serially in THE QUARTERLY,—and what else? John Gerard's *Letters to Friends* would be my answer, for they are the fruit of experience, and, for that reason, original. They are hammered out of the substance of life; they are Theosophy tested and tried, through pain and through joy, through success and failure, with strong effort and with uttermost fidelity. There are books which attempt to paraphrase or to explain Theosophy, intellectually, some of which are valuable; there are other books, alas! which consist merely of psychic self-delusion—a prostitution of the name, Theosophy, for which Adyar and its dupes are chiefly responsible;

there are books of all kinds, good and bad, dealing with theosophical "doctrines": but how few, like these *Letters*, that are wrought by the spirit in the furnace of a clear mind and a self-forgetting heart! That they are invaluable, every reader of The QUARTERLY knows, whose memory carries him back some ten years or more. They are additional light on the path, not thrown from the heights of attainment, but cast from nearer our own level upon obstacles immediately confronting us, revealing new incentives, re-enkindling hope, inspiring fresh determination. Above all else, they *explain* why and where we fail, and how we may succeed.

E. T. H.

The Religious and Social Problems of the Orient, by Masaharu Anesaki. The Macmillan Company, 1923; price, $1.00.

The author, who has held professorships in Tokyo Imperial University and Harvard University, delivered the four lectures which make up this slender book at the University of California.

With the fine courtesy of the Oriental, he speaks for the most part of what interests his Occidental audience, and keeps very much in the background some things which are of transcendent interest to himself. He says enough on one vital topic, to make us desire much more: namely, the inner, spiritual life of a Northern Buddhist, who is profoundly in earnest in his religion.

We have space for only one passage from the lectures, to illustrate this:

"The whole stream of Buddhist influence found an inexhaustible fountain-head in this transformed life, to which the teaching of 'non-ego' leads, and at this source stood always the inspiring figure of Buddha's personality. We have made a brief reference to Buddhist activities in missionary endeavour, philanthropic work, social betterment, artistic inspiration, and here we shall be content with simply pointing out in explanation that these works are the manifestation of the sense of unity in all. And through the centuries that these activities have been going on all over the Asiatic continent and the southeastern islands, those who worked were men who had undergone the discipline of self-negation. They only followed the example of the founder in overcoming narrow egoism, and in expressing in deeds and works the spiritual vision thereby attained. The life of the best Buddhists was a life in imitation of Buddha, following his footsteps both in the matter of negation and of expansion. Emulation, however, describes their attitude better than imitation, because the source of their beliefs and their zeal lay in a spiritual communion with Buddha, in which reverent admiration and worshipful contemplation were mingled. Therein they realized direct communion, union in faith, with Buddha himself. In this way he was for them not merely the founder of Buddhism but the saviour of Buddhists. And the manifold evolution of the Buddhist faith, together with its achievements in various directions, was in one sense the continuous and ever-wider unfolding of Buddha's personal inspiration, which, we may mention, the Buddhist faith identified with the truth of existence embodied in his life.

"Now that we have spoken of the saviourship of Buddha, we must say that it did not imply an idea of vicarious salvation as in Christianity, though, as a matter of fact, a branch of Buddhism has emphasized something akin to the latter. This is not the place to discuss the difference or relation between saviourship that is vicarious and saviourship working through spiritual communion, but we admit freely and fully that there is a gap between the two religions in this respect."

On this, two comments may be made: first, "saviourship working through spiritual communion" appears to many students to be the truer ideal of Christianity; and, second, that the passage we have quoted, brief as it is, gives more real insight into the spiritual side of the Buddhist religion than a score of popular expositions of Buddhism. We should like to see this devout and scholarly writer put his best effort into a book on the spiritual side of the Buddha's teaching.

C. J.

The Conquest of Happiness, by Jules Payot; authorized translation by Richard Duffy. Funk & Wagnalls Company; price, $1.75.

This is another excellent and stimulating book, full of suggestive illustrations and clear-cut, penetrating analysis. "It is our business to make the coming day just what we want it to be" (p. 84), might be taken as the key-phrase of the whole study. A man who waits for happiness to drift into his life, may taste for a brief moment some of the lesser fruits, but will soon find himself the prey of "adverse circumstances," "hard luck," or sickness and death and the many inevitable ills of mundane existence. But happiness is not the capricious gift of some stingy god; happiness is the resultant of certain causes, which we can generate in ourselves. "We can mould our soul by resolutely directing our thoughts and sentiments so that, irrespective of what happens, we shall never become marionettes at the mercy of events" (p. 85). "One has no right to become discouraged until one has had recourse to all possible and impossible means" (p. 93). "The causes of our failures, sufferings, and misfortunes lie in ourselves" (p. 108): how many believe that,—read it again! "The irremediable defect of most amusements is that they do not amuse, and so prevent one from discovering real happiness" (p. 237). "Just a little bit of will is sufficient in order to conquer more will-power, and then still more" (p. 411).

These sentences suggest, perhaps, the spirit and the approach of the work. Dr. Payot has discovered that "All the way to heaven is heaven"—but one must really and truly be seeking heaven to find this true. Any man and every man can and should be happy. A. G.

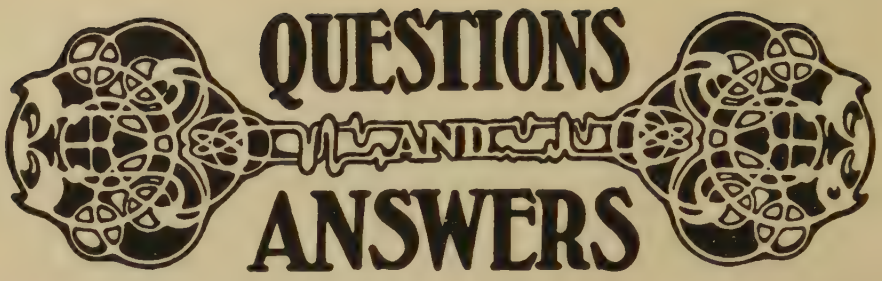
A History of Magic and Experimental Science During the First Thirteen Centuries of our Era, by Lynn Thorndike. 2 vols. The Macmillan Company, 1923; price, $10.00.

No student of mediæval thought can afford henceforth to be without this book, which is truly a monument of encyclopedic learning. Professor Thorndike has adapted to his use a great deal of familiar material, but at the same time he has brought to light many manuscripts never before worked over. Of special value is the exceptionally complete bibliography.

It is unfortunate, however, that the author's attitude towards most of his data is so unsympathetic. He confesses candidly his ardent belief in the supremacy of the experimental method over all other methods of seeking truth, but he is making a very broad assumption when he argues that the experimental method has only been effectively applied to Nature by the human mind during the last few hundred years. And it is not altogether just to regard magic and science as polar opposites. The "magic" of classical and mediæval times was, of course, a crude mixture of knowledge and superstition, which often assumed grotesque forms; but the knowledge was still there, hidden beneath the symbolism, and it may still, perchance, be found by him who seeks. At least one distinguished scientist of to-day, Professor Soddy, suggests that certain magical symbols of antiquity are evidence of a very old experimental science of Nature, so perfectly do those symbols represent the operation of magnetic and radioactive forces. The modern scientist may be only re-discovering and re-phrasing what was known long ages ago, but forgotten. Dr. Thorndike sees no validity in the doctrine of occult potencies, which were supposed to reside in amulets or to emanate from the planets. But, in spite of the superstitious fancies and observances which darkened the meaning of that doctrine, it is, in essence, only a statement of the great Law of Correspondences. The modern experimental method rests upon the belief that the Law of Correspondences is true. It is significant that many recent discoveries in psychology and physics are an actual confirmation of the truths underlying many an old and despised superstition.

One valuable contribution of Dr. Thorndike's research is the revelation of the actual scientific progress made by the men of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries. Roger Bacon had, in many respects, a better working knowledge of Nature than Galen and Pliny, and Roger Bacon was by no means the only experimental scientist of his time. S. L.

Books reviewed in these columns may be obtained from The Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York, N. Y.



QUESTION NO. 306.—*Why is so much said about having to give up things of all sorts? Is not the right use of God's gifts the larger way?*

ANSWER.—We must give up lesser "gifts" in order to obtain greater ones. Each one of God's gifts has its purpose and its right use, which is to bring us nearer to the Divine. That which is a help at one stage of development becomes a hindrance at a higher stage and has to be "given up" for the larger gifts appropriate to the new condition. It is right and natural for children to play with dolls and tin soldiers. In a grown man it is a sign of arrested development. The time comes when we have to put away our tin soldiers of all sorts in order to give our time and attention to better things. What we have of each is limited, and attention given to lower things, however harmless they seem in themselves, is not available for higher purposes. To be anywhere in the world we have to "give up" being somewhere else. We should, however, never seek to give up anything without striving at the same time to put something better in its place; even sins should be replaced by the opposite virtues. The Masters want us to have life and to have it more abundantly, higher and higher kinds of life, with more, not less, of colour and joy. If we wish to climb the ladder we must leave the lower rungs. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The right use of all of God's gifts is the only way.

God's gifts are both powers and opportunities. The opportunities we cannot give up, for we have produced them by Karma: the powers we have to develop. What we have to give up is wasting our time and misusing our powers. The practice of discrimination will teach us that we have to give up only waste matter, the non-essential, the unreal. ST. C. B.

QUESTION NO. 307.—*What can we do with the personality; can it be so trained as to become an ally of the soul and a means by which we may help others to reach the truth, or must it be eliminated utterly as incorrigible?*

ANSWER.—What does the querent mean by "personality"? Let us take an illustration from the Parable of the Talents. Let us say that the servants were entrusted with a talent of power derived from "that united spirit of life which was their only true Self," as *Light on the Path* puts it. Then if that talent were buried in the ground-matter of material life and were devoted to the acquisition of separate life-sensation or possessions, it would be buried in the earth, and the qualities or possessions so developed would be the personality alluded to as "utterly incorrigible." *As such* it must be eliminated in relation to the united spirit of life, because the talent or power has been entirely diverted or perverted from its proper use. It can be eliminated as such by being transmuted and the power applied to its proper purpose. Then the individuality—the soul—has a proper vesture in a personality fitly representing it, just as physical man clothes himself properly out of regard for others, if for no other reason, and appears "clean, clothed and in his right mind," or, as described when taking his early degrees in a university, "*bene vestitus, moderate doctus et integre sanitatus.*" And as such also he returns to the Lord who gave it, the power, with other talents, to be laid on the altar.

A. K.

ANSWER.—The point is that we—meaning the Higher Nature, the Soul, the real Self—must use the personality and not let it use us. Treat it rather as a servant of the soul than as an ally. It must take orders, not suggest action. Its powers must be in subjection; it must obey. It must be treated as a child, an idiot, or a devil, as the necessity may arise. Eventually, by our thorough command of our personality, by our knowledge of how to handle it, we should be able to help others to attain the same power and knowledge.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—This seems to be explained clearly, completely, and vividly, in The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, January, 1925, in an article entitled "Persy." S. M.

ANSWER.—We can do a great deal with the personality; indeed we must do so, for it is given to us to subdue, and then to train and develop in the right way, that it may become the ally of the soul. If we simply try to kill it we shall fail in our duty, and fail in our task, and it, or rather its skandhas, will meet us next time stronger than ever. It is possible to reform a criminal, but capital punishment is not the way to do it. S.

QUESTION NO. 308.—*Is the individuality the soul, and so ever existent; or is it a product of evolution formed by transmutation of the personality?*

ANSWER.—This question seems to imply that the process of evolution comes to a sudden stop at some point. On the contrary, that law would seem to hold on all planes below the Absolute. The personality appears to be a mask formed of force stolen from the soul; and one of the duties of life is to restore that force to its rightful place. S. M.

ANSWER.—Let us take an illustration, remembering that material illustrations are faulty in relation to consciousness and life. Let a pound of mercury be exposed to air and dust; the result is that tiny globules of mercury are formed, all separate and distinct, which will not run together and unite until purified. This can steadily and increasingly be accomplished by forcing the mercury, however dirty, through a filter, and better still by exposing it to heat and fire, and it is then volatilized and distilled and condensed again, to rebecome the pure and (relatively) homogeneous mercury. Let the soul represent the mercury, and the individuality the slightly soiled particles, becoming increasingly separated so as to become personalities. Study *Light on the Path*, Rule 20, and one may see the process clearly described.

The mercury is necessarily exposed to material life and the dust of material life for the purposes of experience; and the personality properly transmuted is a product of both evolution *and* involution. Q.

ANSWER.—Let us think of the individuality as a spark from the Divine flame, burning dim in our incarnations, as light and fire are drawn from it down into the personality; for whatever of force and power the Lower Nature may possess must inevitably have been drawn from the Higher Nature and perverted. In another incarnation that Divine spark may burn brightly, luminous and radiant, as it draws back again the fire which the personality has stolen.

If, life after life, the personality succeeds in drawing down enough force and power, that spark may be extinguished. But if the individuality, either through tedious and slow effort in successive lives, or through real devotion and indomitable will in this one, draws back again all of the stolen fire, adding to it fresh fuel of its own, the Divine spark evolves into clear flame.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—The individuality is the soul, a spark of the Divine, ever existent. Its problem is so to transmute the personality that it can assimilate it and enlarge its own consciousness by the experience the personality has gained. S.

QUESTION NO. 309.—*Can something be said about the distinction between true feeling and emotion, especially as related to love for a Master?*

ANSWER.—Why do we love our friends? Is it because they are rich and handsome and entertaining and say nice things to us? If so, our love—if we must call it by that name—is an emotion, a state of consciousness which we have identified with pleasure and have classified as desirable. By an association of ideas, we also classify our "friends" as desirable, because they have participated as causes in our pleasant emotions. But, of course, if this be the basis of our relationship, we do not really care a straw about them, once they are separated from their office of ministers to our comfort. Nobody likes mince-pie in the abstract; he only likes the taste of mince-pie.

True feeling is of the Soul, and its very divinity is proved by this fact: that it cannot remain centred in any state of personal pleasure or pain. Emotions may accompany it, may even assist its manifestation, but it is not dependent upon them. True friendship is a genuine blending of consciousness, a compassion which is the sharing of all feeling, both of joy and of sorrow. Nor can it remain as a merely subjective thing; it constantly overflows into action. Like the gods, it is "nourished by sacrifice."

Is not earthly friendship a foreshadowing of the divine relation of Master and chêla?

V. S.

ANSWER.—"By their fruits ye shall know them." What do we do about it? If it is emotion which we feel, we probably rest content in the glow of the moment, and do nothing to transform this glow into action. If it be true feeling, the results should show in our renewed effort with ourselves, and so in our daily intercourse with others and in the little things of our everyday life. A.

ANSWER.—Instead of "emotion," we should like to substitute the word "emotionalism" here. Emotion is a beautiful thing; it *is* "true feeling." The distinction between emotionalism, sentimentalism and all such counterfeits, and the genuine thing, is the distinction between a motor force and an iridescent bubble. The one breaks and evaporates as soon as a puff of reality strikes it; the other does something. Perhaps we can test our love for a Master by our willingness to translate feeling into action; our determination to make his cause our own.

L. S.

ANSWER.—True feeling *is* emotion—the right kind of emotion. It is that moving out from within, to which quite wrongly, the various degrees of psychic sentiment have been attached. The real love and devotion to and for a Master is the result of getting in touch with the "Kingdom of Heaven" where he lives and works. That is what sets the real heart on fire, and in the flame of that fire the dross is burned away which covers the true gold during its "solution" in the crucible of life in the world. The real burning ardour replaces the "psychic counterfeit," for true feeling is coincident with true living. A. K.

ANSWER.—Perhaps one way of putting it would be to say that true feeling has always in it an element of will and results in action, whereas emotion is sterile. We enjoy experiencing the emotion and may seek it solely because we do enjoy it—making even the effort to love a Master a matter of self-indulgence. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Does our "love for the Master" strengthen our wills, make us more disposed to self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, and to do our duties cheerfully; or does it make us irritable and peevish, given to complaining of the "barriers to my spiritual life" placed in our way by an unkind fate or by the perverseness of those about us? J. F. B. M.

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P.	Isis Unveiled, Vols. I and II	cloth, $10.00
	Key to Theosophy	cloth, 2.50
	Secret Doctrine, The, Vols. I and II and Index	cloth, 17.00
	Complete in one book, without subject-index volume	7.50
	Theosophical Glossary	cloth, 3.50
	Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge	cloth, 2.50
	Voice of the Silence	cloth, .85, leather, 1.50
Cavé.	Fragments, Volume I	boards, 1.00
	Volume II	boards, 1.00
	Volume III	boards, 1.00
Gerard, John.	Letters to Friends	boards, 1.75
Hillard, Katherine.	Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth, 3.00
Johnston, Charles.	Bhagavad Gita	Translated, annotated; cloth, 1.25
		limp leather, India paper, 1.75
	Crest Jewel of Wisdom, The	cloth, 1.25
	From the Upanishads	paper, .50
	Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper, .50
	Patanjali's Yoga Sutras	Translated, annotated; cloth, 1.25
	Song of Life, The	paper, .75
Judge, William Q.	Bhagavad Gita	Edited; cloth, .75; leather, 1.50
	Culture of Concentration	paper, .10
	Echoes from the Orient	cloth, .60
	Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I	cloth, 1.00
	Volume II	cloth, 1.00
	Ocean of Theosophy	cloth, 1.00
	Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms	cloth, .75; leather, 1.50
Keightley, Archibald.	Spiritual Life, The	paper, .20
	Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper, .20
LaDow, Stanley V.	Plotinus	paper, .50
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger.	Meditation	paper, .30
	Talks on Religion	cloth, 1.50
	Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper, .20
Sinnett, A. P.	Esoteric Buddhism	cloth, 2.00
	Occult World, The	cloth, 2.00
Walker, E. D.	Reincarnation	cloth, 1.75
Idyll of the White Lotus		cloth, 1.35
Light on the Path		cloth, .75; leather, 1.50; lambskin, 1.75
Through the Gates of Gold		cloth, 1.20

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,

P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Devotional: Bhagavad Gita; Crest Jewel of Wisdom; Fragments; From the Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Letters to Friends; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.

Philosophical: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Isis Unveiled; Key to Theosophy; Plotinus; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Transactions; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.

Introductory: Culture of Concentration; Echoes from the Orient; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the

Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.